

The RED BOOK Magazine

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VOL. XLVII, NO. 3

Published monthly. On sale the 12th of each month preceding date of issue.

JULY, 1926

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OUR OWN HALL OF FAME



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F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

In the next issue of this magazine will be published the first of a new group of stories that this distinguished author has been writing for you. Since his last story appeared in these pages Mr. Austin has visited all the countries of Europe gathering material—economic and social—for the book that has engrossed him. But now it's written, he turns again to his fiction. You will long remember his new story,

"A DRAMA UNREHEARSED"

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Subscription price: \$2.50 a year in advance. Canadian postage 50c per year. Foreign postage \$1.00 per year.

Subscriptions are received by all new dealers and booksellers, or may be sent direct to the Publisher. Remittance must be made by Draft, Post Office or Express

Money Order, by Registered Letter or by Postage Stamps of 2-cent denomination, and not by check, because of exchange charges.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Notification regarding change of subscriber's address must reach us four weeks in advance of the next day of issue.

ADVERTISING FORMS close on the 3rd of the second preceding month (September forms close July 3rd). Advertising rates on application.

THE CONSOLIDATED MAGAZINES CORPORATION, Publisher, The Red Book Magazine, 36 So. State Street, Chicago, Ill.

CHARLES M. RICHTER
Vice-President

LOUIS ECKSTEIN
President

RALPH K. STRASSMAN
Vice-President

Office of the Advertising Director, 33 West 42nd Street, New York City, N. Y.
R. M. FURVES, New England Representative, 80 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. LONDON OFFICES, 6 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W. C.

Entered as second-class matter April 25, 1905, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879

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"Mute, Inglorious Miltons"

By M. MERCER KENDIG, A. B.

Director, Department of Education, THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

EVERYDAY the world is losing real personalities, individuals of great potentiality. It is a tragic fact that for every genius whose rich endowment is fruitfully developed, thousands are never permitted to bloom. This constitutes the most stupendous waste in human life. It is largely due to the blight of circumstance.

Leadership, genius, talent, all succumb in an untoward environment. Their precious value is lost at a time when mankind needs them more than ever as constructive stimuli to the masses.

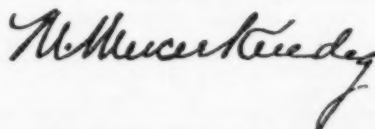
Heredity does not produce actualities, only potentialities. It depends upon the development of the individual whether they shall become actualities. How narrowly the great Newton escaped being an obscure farmer; Pasteur a provincial tanner; Faraday an unknown bookbinder; Wilson a reticent schoolmaster; Roosevelt a frail cowboy on our western plains. Throughout the world there must be many men of equal native endowments who, missing the slender chance that came to these, will never be heard from. A strangling environment is their living sepulchre!

As a matter of undisputed fact the human mind is the greatest force in the world. Whatever thwarts its utmost development is a racial waste. And all waste is a positive loss. Nothing mitigates the tremendous loss of what the human mind might achieve if it were fully developed to seek and find and seize its greater opportunities.

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That is why our best Private Schools are the environment in which inherited potentialities may be sublimated into powers of brilliant, influential and achieving expression, either at the bench of the artisan or in the seats of the mighty. From these "mute, inglorious Miltons" our Private Schools create that vital voice in human leadership to which all must listen, which many follow and many obey.

The publishers of The Red Book Magazine have for many years realized the value of the Private Schools and Camps. They have established a comprehensive Information Department which gives to readers without charge, information collected by personal visits to Private Residential Schools and Summer Camps throughout the United States.





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See page 13 for "Said One Man to Another."

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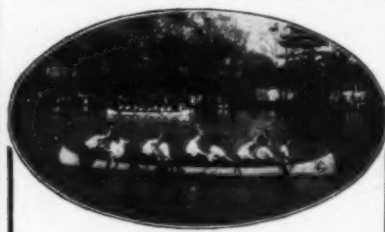
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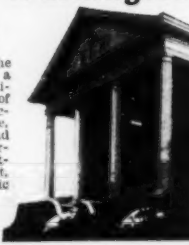
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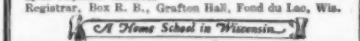
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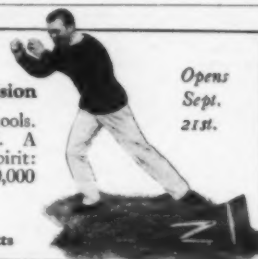
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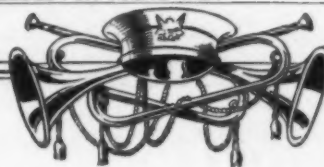
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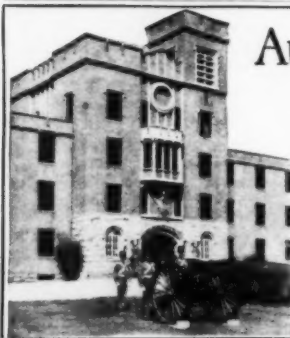
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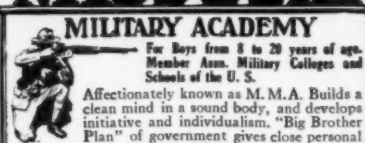
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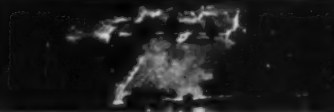


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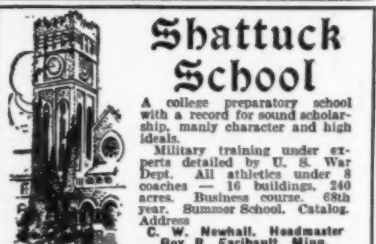
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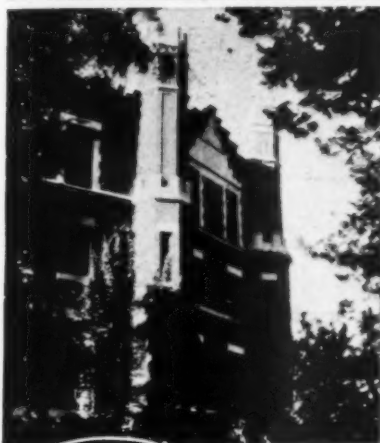
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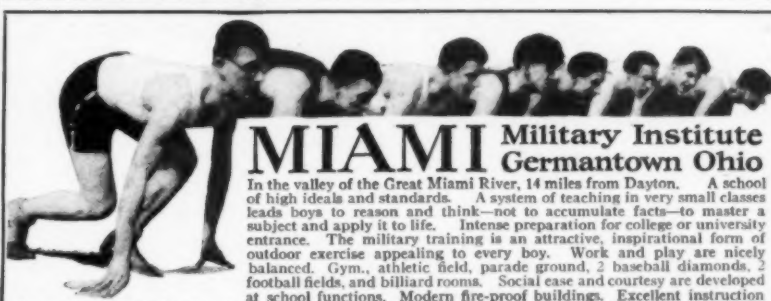
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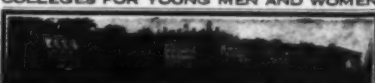
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For example, it was LaSalle training in Higher Accountancy that helped Donald McDonald advance from the position of Secretary and Assistant Manager to that of Vice-President and General Manager of Sales. It was LaSalle training in Traffic Management that helped S. A. Cash advance from clerk to Traffic Manager. It was LaSalle training in Modern Business Correspondence and Business Management that helped C. L. McClure advance from general bookkeeper to Office Manager. It was LaSalle training in Business Management that helped L. D. Duncan make good as Credit Manager, and LaSalle training in Personnel Management that prepared E. H. Bolton as Manager of Personnel.

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As she received her final pay-check, she demanded of her employer: "Please tell me the truth—why am I let out?"

"I'd rather not discuss it," the other replied, leaving her even more mystified.

* * *

You, yourself, rarely know when you have halitosis (unpleasant breath). That's the insidious thing about it. And even your closest friends won't tell you.

Sometimes, of course, halitosis comes from some deep-seated organic disorder that requires professional advice. But usually—and fortunately—halitosis is only a local condition that yields to the regular use of Listerine as a mouth wash and gargle. **It puts you on the safe and polite side. Moreover, in using Listerine to combat halitosis, you are quite sure to avoid sore throat and those more serious illnesses that start with throat infections.**

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Free Salvation

By Angelo Patri

Decoration by Franklin Booth



A CHEERY person in blue overalls, armed with a pot of paint and an armful of brushes, set his message on the face of the rock by the turn of the road: "Salvation is free."

I wondered, as I watched him hop into his battered old car and clatter out of sight, if he really knew no better than that. Salvation free, indeed! When of all things known to the spirit of man, salvation costs most. Money has nothing to do with it. The price far transcends any matter of the marketplace. Salvation is the prize of life. Who would have it free? If the prize is handed one before the race is begun, what good?

It simply is not true. You remember the young man who asked the price of salvation and went away sorrowful because he thought it too high? He understood. He knew that it meant not alone all he possessed but all that he was, all he hoped to be.

St. Francis knew what the price meant and paid it gladly. Home, position, friends, he gave all and went out to earn his salvation in poverty and disgrace and pain, as many another man and woman is doing today. They wear no uniform save the serge and tweed of every day, and the pledge is secret; but they jauntily shoulder the cost of life and go on.

You cannot call it living if you are dodging the price of life from day to day. Life cannot be evaded. It is remorseless, relentless in its demands, eternal in its drive. It will have its way. The prize you clutched in defiance turns to lead in your hand; the joy you stole in reckless disobedience dissolves in tears; the burden you shirked waits grimly at your elbow.

Ask any man or woman who has lived for forty years, struggling against odds to be decent, to resist the temptation to take the easy way, and hear what the answer is. Every atom of soul-power had to be created out of the quivering flesh. Every lift of spirit had to be torn from the resisting, weighted body. Every note of joy rose from the heart eased after aching. Salvation means rebirth, and birth comes but through travail.

No, no, my bluebird friend, it is not free. Free offerings are for beggars, and men are the princes of the earth. Theirs is the King's ransom, a crown of thorns, set at the proud stretch of a soul's full reach, and then freedom.

Franklin Booth

The Home of Happy People

Decoration by John Scott Williams

By Edgar A. Guest



Well, if anything can beat it,
I should like it to be told me.
Just a throng about the fireside and
the laughter ringing sweet.
By every human passion which has
swayed me and controlled me,
Here's the purpose for all conquest,
here's the comfort for defeat.
Here's the home aglow with gladness,
love and laughter ringing clear,
Young and old friends making merry
and all happy to be here!

Here's the very thing we dreamed of
in that springtime of our wooing.
Here's the castle which we built
in that distant long ago.
All our children gathered round us,
doing just as they are doing—
Could a greater earthly triumph any
living mortal know?
Here's the joy which we have worked for;
here's the scene we've longed to see:
Ours a home all mirth and gladness,
where our children like to be.

Here's the purpose of all struggle,
when you've come to understand it.
Here's the source of true contentment
wheresoever man may be.
Here's our life's supreme achievement,
just exactly as we planned it—
Friends and neighbors and the children
glad to be with her and me.
So I glory in the laughter and the
music and the mirth,
For the home of happy people holds
the riches of the earth.





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Always exquisite, always freshly lovely — skin smooth and soft, cheeks faintly flushed, lips lusciously gleaming — that is how women should ever be. And most charmingly this ideal is accomplished with COTY Poudre Compacte, the new COTY Rouge — and Lipstick, all three designed especially for the purse or bag. Their rich, distinctive shades perfect the natural colouring of every type.

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IDEALS OF BEAUTY

Physical Perfection



*That
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PALMOLIVE is a beauty soap made solely for *one* purpose; to foster good complexions.

In France, home of cosmetics, Palmolive is the second largest selling soap and has supplanted French soaps by the score. In beauty-wise Paris, Palmolive is the "imported" soap.

RIGHT living, right diet and proper exercise are the factors leading experts urge for physical perfection. For skin perfection these experts urge natural ways in skin care.

Thus, on expert advice, the artificial beauty methods of yesterday have largely been discarded.

Foremost beauty authorities have found beauty insurance starts with proper cleansing of the skin. They urge the soothing lather of olive and palm oils as blended in Palmolive as the safe, natural way in skin care. Most of the pretty skins you see today are due to it.

Use Palmolive according to the simple rule here given. Note the difference a single week will make. It is nature's formula to "Keep That Schoolgirl Complexion."

Start today with this simple care—

Note how your skin improves

Wash your face gently with soothing Palmolive Soap, massaging the lather softly into the skin. Rinse thoroughly, first with warm water, then with cold. If your skin is inclined to be dry, apply a touch of good cold

cream—that is all. Do this regularly, and particularly in the evening. Use powder and rouge if you wish. But never leave them on over night. They clog the pores, often enlarge them. Blackheads and disfigurements often follow. They must be washed away.

Avoid this mistake

Do not use ordinary soaps in the treatment given above. Do not think any green soap, or one represented as of olive and palm oils, is the same as Palmolive.

And it costs but 10c the cake! So little that millions let it do for their bodies what it does for their faces. Obtain a cake today. Then note what an amazing difference one week makes.

Soap from trees!

The only oils in Palmolive Soap are the soothing beauty oils from the olive tree, the African palm, and the coconut palm—and no other fats whatsoever. That is why Palmolive Soap is the natural color that it is—for palm and olive oils, nothing else, give Palmolive its natural green color.

The only secret to Palmolive is its exclusive blend—and that is one of the world's priceless beauty secrets.



THE PALMOLIVE COMPANY (Del. Corp.), CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Palmolive Soap is untouched by human hands until you break the wrapper—it is never sold unwrapped

Retail Price **10c**

A COMMON-SENSE EDITORIAL

By BRUCE BARTON

A Visit with President Coolidge

RECENTLY I was invited to spend an evening with a Good Woman.

She is active in at least eleven different Causes, and each one has a sure formula for making the world right tomorrow. She kept asking me if I had read this, and if I agreed with the new theory of Professor Whosit, and why I didn't write something that would make Congress pass a law.

As I walked home, feeling old and exhausted, I recalled gratefully the most restful hour in my recent experience. It was at the White House between the hours of four and five one afternoon. The President was in his office alone, and he invited me to sit and talk. It was wonderful, in this rushing world, to have a real old-fashioned visit with the only American who apparently is under no pressure and has no serious problems on his mind.

John Adams was a very conscientious Good Man. He complained that while he was "active and alert in every branch of business, both in the House and on committees, constantly proposing measures, supporting some and opposing others, discussing and arguing on every question," Benjamin Franklin was to be seen "from day to day, sitting in silence, a great part of his time asleep in his chair."

"Yet," says the biographer, "Frank-

lin was appointed on every important committee, and Adams on few; and if Franklin could have read his brother Congressman's comparison, he might have fairly retorted with the wisdom of Poor Richard, 'He that speaks much is much mistaken,' or, 'The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise.'"

Extreme busyness is a symptom of low vitality. Small harassed natures are fidgety, oppressed by the shortness of life and the demands of duty.

Whenever you come into the presence of real greatness, either in life or through books, you experience a certain atmosphere of calm. This man is master of his course. He knows where he is going, and that there is time enough.

Once in a secondhand book store I ran across an old sermon entitled, "The Leisure of God." The sermon proved to be no good, but what a wonderful title!

God is leisurely. He has so much time to fuss with sunsets, to plant flowers on deserted prairies where they will never be seen, and for other splendid inefficiencies. A thousand years in His sight are as a day. And it is quite obvious from the arrangements which He has made for perpetuating the race that He has no expectation of all Good Works being finished in our generation.



The new dainty form of
BEAUTY'S TRADITIONAL GUARDIAN



IN Beauty's service for almost half a century—this is the history of Ivory Soap. And now Ivory comes forth in charming new array. For Ivory's sterling purity and mildness have been newly moulded into Guest Ivory's dainty form, and becomingly garbed in Guest Ivory's dress of blue. Instinctively you will like Guest Ivory for your face and hands. You will be delighted with its petite new form, modeled to fit slim feminine fingers. And how surprised you will be at its modest price—five cents! It may be purchased almost anywhere.

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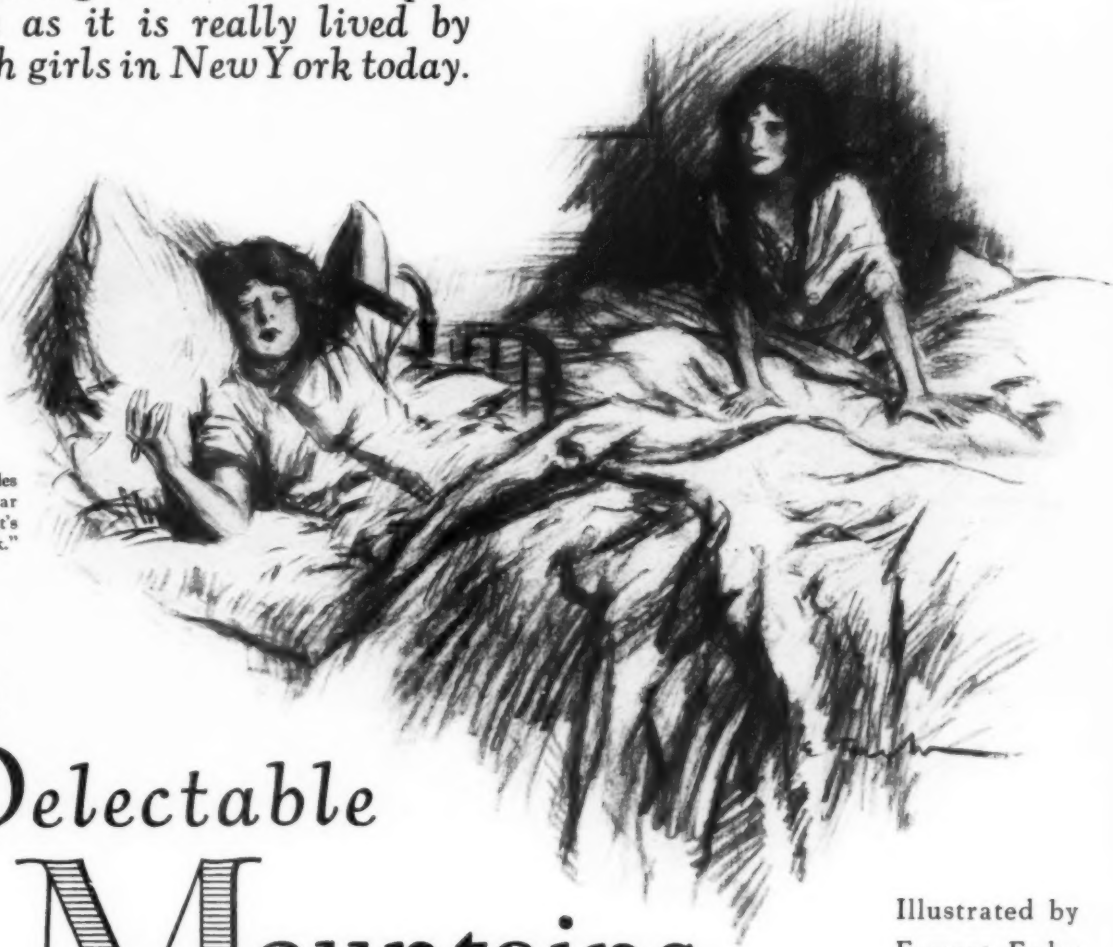
July 1926 • Volume XLVII • Number 3

KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN, *Editor*

EDGAR SISSON, *Associate Editor*

Here begins the revealing story of a transplanted rancher and a show-girl that touches upon life as it is really lived by such girls in New York today.

"Hell," Mercedes said in a clear sweet voice, "it's twelve o'clock."



The Delectable Mountains

Illustrated by
Ernest Fuhr

By Struthers Burt

THE author of this splendid novel will be specifically recalled for his earlier work "The Interpreter's House," which at the time of publication was critically declared to be the most distinguished piece of America's fiction of the season. As an Easterner, and a Wyoming rancher, Mr. Burt in the present story dramatically brings together America's East and West.

IF you are very beautiful to begin with, and have brains, you are immediately given a part in the Irrationalities where you wear a great many clothes—a bewildering multitude of clothes. And you are taught to sing and dance and act. For there are grades in the Irrationalities. It is a hierarchy of the physique, presided over by a dark, silent man who resembles a Mosaic archangel. If you are very beautiful but none too clever,—and that sometimes happens,—you are still allowed to wear clothes, but you are allowed to do very little else. You furnish a large-eyed, pendulous-lipped background for more intelligent pulchritude. But if you have brains, or a fair amount of them, and no amazing beauty, you are expected to do a number of complex things, and one of them is to wear the diaphanous costumes imagined by the scenic director in his more thoughtful moments.

And what are you going to do about it, especially if you have brains and not the startling beauty already mentioned? And if you have chosen the theater as a livelihood? It is the spirit that counts.

And so far Mercedes Garcia—her real name was Mercedes Wiggins—in her five years of theatrical adventure had managed to keep her spirit fairly aloof. That it was more pragmatic than when she had first come to New York at the age of eighteen is not to be wondered at; then she had had her dreams. She still had them, but she no longer allowed them to interfere with her conversation. That is one of the many odd things about New York—about all great cities; they are filled with somnambulists pretending to be awake. And Mercedes, having been brought up in a small town, and a peculiar small town at that, had more definite dreams than most. They were uppermost when she decided that she would not be Mercedes Wiggins all her life, or even Mercedes Garcia, but some one much more worth while. She was very anxious to find out just what being "worth while" meant.

Everyone is born to an individual confusion, as well as to the general numbing confusion of the world. And Mercedes was more confused, if such a thing be possible, than most; for she was neither the daughter of the uneducated, and so fairly satisfied, nor the daughter of the educated, and so articulately dissatisfied; and she had spent her childhood in a place where there was a curious mixture of materialism and idealism; where what money could do for you was obvious on every hand, and yet where money, at least on the surface, had come to worship at the feet of a deliberate crusading sort of poverty. In other words, Mercedes had been born in a small university town somewhere between the Hudson and the Potomac rivers.

Her father, Mr. Wiggins, a short, heavy-set, gray-mustached man, with vague, opaque gray eyes and a manner that pleased his superiors because they thought it was that "of the English peasantry" and an answer to Bolshevism, was a highly respected citizen, so highly respected that he had never done anything in his life but have eight children and make a bare living. In the summer and autumn and spring he cut lawns and looked after numerous small gardens belonging to townspeople or members of the university faculty; in the winter he stoked and regulated the furnaces of these same townspeople and professors. His occupations, so seasonally at variance, changed his nature and changed it back again. In the warm weather he was soft, gentle, meditative and horticultural; in cold weather he became grim, curt and troglodytic.

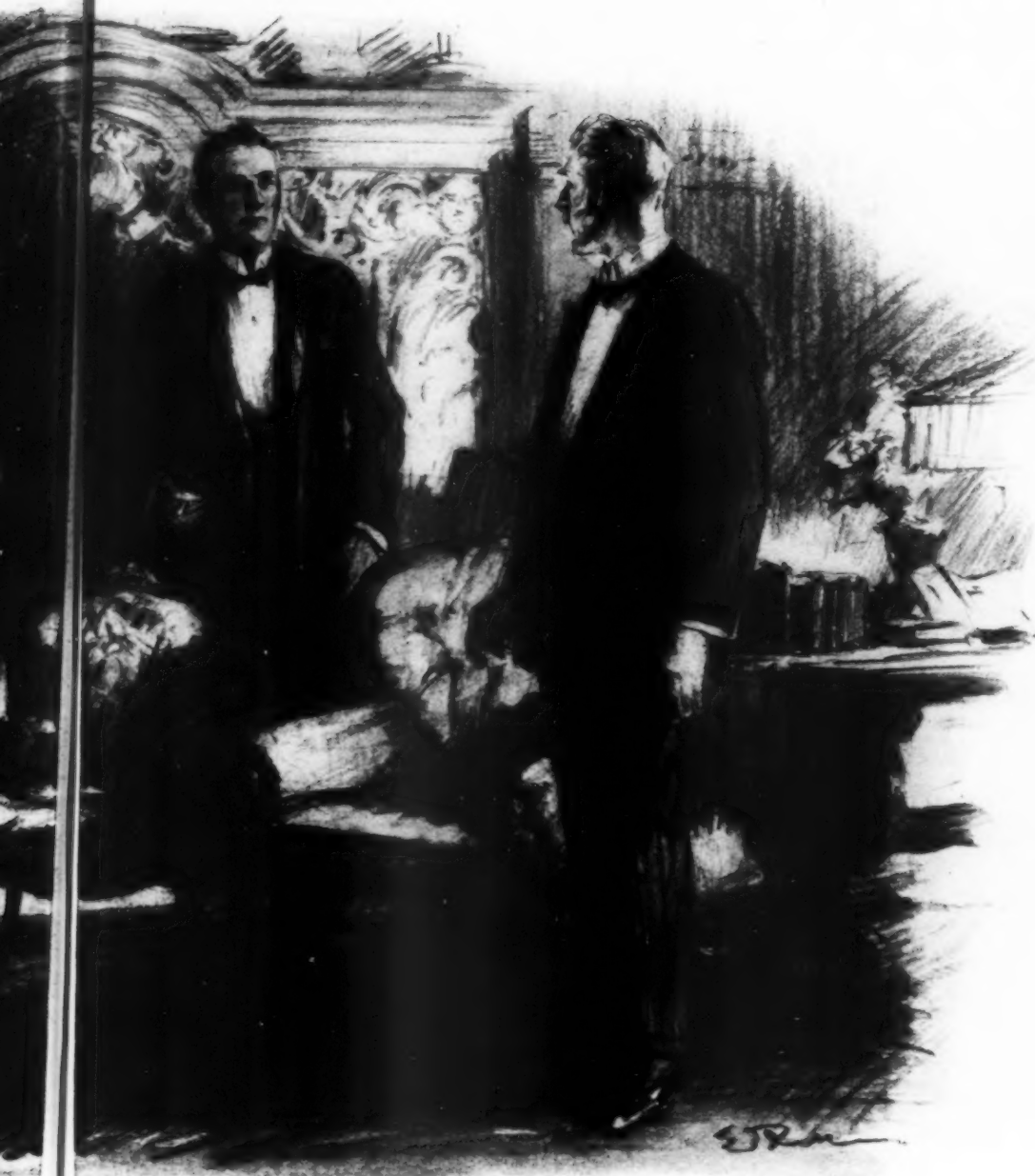
Only once in his life had Mr. Wiggins done a fantastic thing, and that was when he had married Maria Garcia, the daughter



"You are outrageous and impertinent, sir," said Mr. Londreth. "I will not argue with you."

of a drooping-mustached Spaniard who had set up an ice-cream parlor and fruit-store just around the corner. And this marriage, little as it affected Mr. Wiggins and Maria,—Mrs. Wiggins immediately proceeded to grow monumentally fat and silent, not even objecting when her husband proceeded to bring up her quiverful according to his faith, not hers,—affected Mercedes greatly, outside of the somewhat obvious fact that it enabled her to enter this just and kindly world. In the first place it gave her her Christian name—also her family name when she found Wiggins hardly suited for the stage; and in the second place, it gave her what she thought was a fanciful background and an excuse. Whenever she did anything odd, she was accustomed to say, if she said anything at all—she was not much given to excuses: "Oh, but my mother was a Spaniard, you know." Not realizing that the Spaniards are the least romantic people in the world and are preoccupied almost solely with food, and that whatever wildness or unexpectedness she possessed, whatever visions came to her, came probably from the opaque-eyed, gray-eyed Wigginses and the bleak Scotch and Irish moors they had once inhabited.

After all, a man may be very passionate about cutting grass or stoking furnaces.



Mercedes went to a high school. In her leisure hours she played basket-ball, not especially because she enjoyed it, but because it was good for her soul, read the motion-picture magazines, went to the "movies," and on spring evenings walked arm-in-arm with other girls up the main street of the town or on the walks skirting the campus.

The last was a rather terrifying but soul-satisfying adventure: the sidewalks were crowded with lounging and walking and talking young men; there was such a sense of youth triumphant—in which, however, Mercedes felt vaguely she had little part. These young men seldom looked at her and her friends, and if they did, they were not as a rule the most attractive young men. There was a gulf here that Mercedes did not exactly understand, but her father explained it.

"You're a town-girl, Merc," he said, long ago having decided that he could not twist his lips to such an outlandish name as Mercedes. "And those there"—Mercedes wished he wouldn't say "those there;" she had learned that much at high school—"young fellers are stoddents. Don't you never let me catching you mixing with 'em."

He didn't, but that did not prevent Mercedes from meeting a few and hearing others talk, and from realizing that there was

what seemed to be a larger and pleasanter and more laughing life beyond her own experience.

At the end of her high-school days, the war being over, Mercedes went to her father and informed him that she was going to New York to work. She said it simply and finally, as she said most things.

Mr. Wiggins took the news placidly. He had always imagined that Mercedes would work, but why New York?

"I think I can get a job in a theater," she explained. "Mary Holzman has one, and she has written me. You remember Mary Holzman? And then, you know, I always did act at school."

It was a spring evening, soft and filled with the scent of grass. Mr. Wiggins was sitting on the stoop of his Noah's Ark house, in his shirt sleeves, smoking a pipe. He was in a very gentle, horticultural mood.

"Have you told your mother?" he asked.

Mercedes shrugged her shoulders. "Oh, Mother!"

Mr. Wiggins didn't like that. "You shouldn't say, 'Oh, Mother,' even if it was true." He sucked at his pipe.

"A n actress—h'm! Well, be a good girl."

Mercedes's answer was curious, if you consider that she was

a "town-girl," that she was the oldest of a large family, that she knew, having been brought up where she had been, what money was, more than many others of her age, and that, belonging to "the most moral nation in the world," she was at the moment assured that success at almost any cost was worth while. But it was not so curious if you consider that she also belonged, if humbly, to a new and extraordinarily clear-sighted generation. She spoke thoughtfully between half-opened lips, as she always spoke unless excited or laughing—as if she was saying something fairly important. Before she spoke, she leaned down and plucked a blade of grass and put it in her mouth and nibbled it.

"I think," she said, straightening up and as if to herself, "I will be. It's only boobs who go wrong without good reason."

Mr. Wiggins took his pipe out of his mouth and stared and put his pipe back again. He never argued with Mercedes. He had only done so once, and then it hadn't been satisfactory: she had simply walked away.

All this had taken place five years earlier, and since then Mercedes had managed to support herself decently if not luxuriously. She had real assets. She was clever; she was pretty; she was industrious; and she had, although that is the last

thing considered in New York, a charming, if small, voice. It was not heard when her companions began to sing; it was lost in a cacaphony of nasals; but it was there all the same. The dark archangel who presided over her destiny liked her and taught her to sing and dance and assured her for the time being a sufficient income. For the time being—the dark archangel was generous, but not to wrinkles. She no longer thought of herself as an actress; she called herself quite frankly, and not unproudly, “an Irrationalities girl;” the word “career,” also at one time vaguely at the back of her small dark head, was replaced by the phrase “makin’ a living.” She wore very gay and unconsciously provocative dresses, excellent imitations of good materials and good designs, which astonished her neighborhood circle when she appeared for one of her rare holidays, and she was an object of awed delight to her younger brothers and sisters, who felt somehow that her profession should entitle them to free admission to the motion pictures.

She was very metropolitan. She used slang of strange and cynical import; she seldom said what she meant, and she mistrusted the emotions.

Also she discovered during her brief visits to the town where she was born a new attitude on her part toward the gay and handsome youths who frequented the university and who had once so frightened her. She found now she looked down upon them with an amused and cool detachment. She had seen some of them trying to make juvenile and somewhat drunken love to her friends; one or two had even tried to make love to her.

AT all events, and for one reason or another, on this March day Mercedes was able to awake in her own small and inexpensive apartment, on a side-street high up in the city, and, clad in a pair of silk pajamas bought by herself, regard with eyes still innocent the innocent sleeping face of her friend and roommate, Miss Hazel Tourneur, born Henrietta Turner of Salt Lake City twenty years before.

Miss Tourneur, who occupied another narrow brass trimmed bed in a far corner of the room, had gorgeous soft red hair—unbobbed—which she made into two long plaits each night and which now framed her youthful countenance; she also had a soft red mouth and a rose-leaf complexion. From a distance she was far more striking than Mercedes, and so she drew a larger salary and was always allowed to wear clothes. Moreover she had had the added advantage of starting her theatrical career by winning a “beauty contest” at Saltair, the bathing-beach of the metropolis of Utah. But Miss Tourneur was not perfect, despite the judges. When you looked at her closer, you saw that her blue eyes were a trifle colorless and her nose a trifle shapeless. Just at present, of course, she resembled a sleeping saint. Her face was inexpressibly childlike and good—too good, stained as it was with a kindly, weak red mouth. Miss Tourneur was so kind and good, despite a recently developed drawling and caustic manner, that she had all the capabilities of a wastrel. There were moments when Mercedes felt that she supplied in common sense what her friend Hazel supplied by a more generous income and a more resplendent position.

It was a blessed day. There wasn't an engagement of any kind that Mercedes could think of until the theater that night. Indeed, she couldn't think of a single engagement, save the same theater, until three o'clock of the succeeding afternoon, when she had promised to take tea with a Mr. Charles Pointer Hastings, a portrait painter, in his studio. This vacuum gave her a delightful and unaccustomed feeling of leisure. She decided to spend the hours after luncheon at the Bronx Zoo, but in making this plan she did not include Miss Tourneur, who had no interest in animals at all.

Mercedes yawned, stretched her arms, leaned over and took her wrist-watch from the dressing-table beside her bed.

“Hell,” she said in a clear sweet voice that awakened Miss Tourneur, “it's twelve o'clock.”

And it was precisely two minutes later that Stephen Londreth, almost a hundred miles away, stepped out of a taxicab in front of his father's house, having arrived at the station half an hour before on the Chicago train; and being admitted by a parlor-maid he did not know, went along the front hall, up a flight of stairs and entered a room opening off from a landing halfway between the first and second stories.

Stephen had not been home for two years, and the room is important because, thick with memories, as rooms long lived in are, smooth with the invisible patina of incidents that had happened to Stephen in his youth, it had, undoubtedly, much to do with the course of folly upon which Stephen within a short time—within a day, to be exact—embarked.

The room was the library and sitting-room of a Philadelphia house, and as is usually the case with Philadelphia sitting-rooms—a construction peculiar, with one or two exceptions, to that materially generous but mentally close-fisted city—it occupied a great deal of space and was in the “back buildings.” That is, you went up the main stairs, came, as already has been said, to a landing halfway between the first floor and the second, and turning to your left, ascended three wall-enclosed steps.

Stephen looked about him. “Wi-will you t-tell Mrs. Londreth, my m-mother,” he said to the parlor-maid who had followed his long legs pantingly, “that I am here? I'm her s-son, Mr. S-Stephen Londreth. Is she, or my father, or anyone, in? What's your name?”

“Oh, yes sir. Delia, sir; that's my name. They're expecting you. That is, Mrs. Londreth and your sister, Mrs. Miles, is here. They got your telegram this morning. Mr. Londreth is at his office. I'll tell them.”

The parlor-maid departed, pleasantly excited. Stephen was by far the youngest and gayest and most casual Londreth she had yet seen. Wanted to know her name, too. That was nice of him. And had a lovely smile. “Very pretty eyes,” as well; green and grayish and brilliant. Pity he stuttered. Might have been handsome if his face hadn't been so thin, and if it had had more color in it,—not just that brown sunburn,—and if his hair only curled and was black or gold instead of a nondescript chestnut. And he dressed well—“careless and rich.”

Left to himself, Stephen thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and looked about the room again. It hadn't changed much in two years. The flowers, carnations in vases and an azalea in a copper bowl in one corner, were different; the dates of the magazines at one end of the table were new. As Stephen remembered, the room had never changed greatly, merely maintaining itself impeccably; comfortable, beautifully polished, filled with sunlight, a trifle too still, a trifle too warm—altering itself a little every now and then, of course, to the dictates of new fashions, such as the substitution of chintz for corduroy and so on, but that was all. The fire of thin oak logs in the wide fireplace, with its supporting columns of fluted gray marble and its shining brass andirons and fender, and its long mirror over the mantelpiece, cracked softly. The somewhat lifeless sunlight lay across the thick wine-colored Persian rug. Stephen began to feel a curious lowering of his spirits. He recollected that this had happened to him before, returning from school for his holidays, from his university, from war, returning several times, as at present, from the West. It occurred to him that once over there—right in that corner—his father had whipped him, too righteously indignant even to wait for the decency of an upper story.

He turned his head at the sound of voices.

Descending the stairs, opposite the steps that led into the library, were his mother and his sister Joan.

Chapter Two

THERE are certain rôles in life that people think they can play without preparation, and subsequently, without thought. And too often these rôles are among the most important. No one would dream, for instance, of designing a great house without some knowledge of architecture, but everyone imagines that he or she can be a member of a family. And yet, being a member of a family is a subtle and complex job, and the building of an ordinary house is as nothing compared to the building of the house of kinship.

In the house of kinship there are a hundred rooms, some of them open and sunny, some hidden and filled with shadows, some that are torture-chambers and some where people go apart to weep, and, in particular, above the house is always a huge attic, seldom looked into, where have been left the odds and ends, the swords and fans and masques, the brass knuckles and skeleton-keys, the laughing or passionate or shameful reminders of previous generations. Ghosts creep from stairs to stairs; ghosts come down from the attic. And along with them, unaware of them, those who are living create other ghosts that wander interminably and have no end.

Therefore, although he was only confusedly aware of them,—and his father, James Ogden Londreth, and his mother, born Wilmerding and named Charlotte, and his two older brothers James Ogden, Junior, and Ralph Taylor Londreth, and his elder sister Joan, Mrs. William Debit Miles, weren't aware of them at all where he was concerned,—ghosts similar to those mentioned

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Stephen struggled to his feet. Standing by the tall lamp was a young woman.

above, ghosts from the attic and the third story and the second and the first, were what drove Stephen Londreth the following evening into the apparently simple act of knocking upon the door of his friend Hugo Vizately.

Apparently simple. Knocking upon a door is never really simple, especially in a city like New York.

Indeed, the only member of Stephen's immediate family who could not be held directly responsible was his younger sister Molly—the ex-Mrs. Warren Orpen of Boston—who for three years had inhabited Cannes and Biarritz and Paris, and other uncertain parts of the world, and whose name was not mentioned at all when silence was possible—the Londreths, as a family, still cherishing the quaint superstition that if you didn't speak of the devil he wouldn't appear, not realizing that it is just the other

way about, and that an intelligent devil, noticing a silence, immediately begins to investigate.

Not directly responsible, no—that is, Mrs. Orpen—for that charming and generous young woman had never directly in her life done anything that would cause a crisis or hard feeling. But indirectly, yes. Very much so. For it was she, at the moment delightfully installed in a villa at Nice she could not afford,—she never could afford any of the places in which she lived,—who, by writing a letter to Stephen which he had received in Wyoming three weeks earlier, had gathered together all the ghosts in the Londreth sitting-room the night of his arrival and added a ghost or two more. Had you told her this, she would have been astonished—and talked about the evil in the world. She was always astonished and indignant at the results of her own actions.

The letter had had a journey. It had left the Côte d'Azur,—where a blue sea touched hesitatingly a gray and green coast, and where Mrs. Orpen from her window looked over a rose and tawny town to hills buried in mimosa,—and crossing a stormy and windswept Atlantic and a continent like an ocean itself and still as grim and leaden as a February ocean, had finally arrived in Stephen's valley, where winter had two months more to go, but where winter at its best is a matter of dazzling snow and dazzling cloudless skies. The mail had been brought up by a man on skis from the post office eight miles away; and Stephen with a mental groan—since the war, Molly had never written him except when she was in trouble—standing in the warm direct sunlight on the back porch of his great sprawling log-cabin ranch-house, had dropped the mass of week-old newspapers and antedated magazines and strange letters, and had picked up his sister's letter first.

To Stephen's left to the west, three miles away, immense serrated peaks raised their heads, their foothills covered with dark forests of pine, their brilliant summits striking the brilliant upper atmosphere like full chords sharp and treble. To the north and east the valley, white and dancing, stretched away until it met other mountains which in their thick mantles resembled rounded nebulae resting upon the earth. It was a startlingly still country; the heady quiet air gave you a little shock of pleasure each time you drew it in between your lips.

Stephen heard from the direction of the corrals and feed-grounds the sound of crunching steps, and raised his head to see his head foreman—his manager, rather—approaching along the narrow path, trodden hard, sunk a foot or two below the four-foot level of the snow: Jean Laplace, French-Canadian, small, dark, wiry; a Frenchman where his friends were concerned, that is to say, ready at any moment to spring into fierce action; a Frenchman where his enemies were concerned, cold, unscrupulous and cynical, sometimes very much like a devil. Stephen loved him as only a man leading a lonely life and sharing common adventures can love another. Between the dangling earflaps of the fur cap he was wearing, Laplace's brown, clean-shaven, lined face peered out like that of a wise animal. His nose was constantly moving as if he were sniffing an underlayer of delicate hidden smells. He was uncannily alert, terrestrially.

Stephen slit with a jack-knife the pale blue envelope he was holding. A faint perfume, wistful and evanescent, still lingered about the closely written pages and, escaping, met the stark and keen smell of Wyoming.

"Dear," the letter began, "Stevie, dear:" Only the first two paragraphs or so are necessary.

"Your unfortunate and desolate sister is as usual in a fix and doesn't know what to do about it, and as usual is turning to you as the only member of her family who seems to have any sense at all and does not regard a wife who divorces a drunken and lecherous husband as a fallen woman. God knows I went through four years of hell before I did it.

"I am in debt as always, and I cannot live, any more than ever, on the absurd allowance that Father gives me. However, that is not the point. I'm used to that, and I manage to survive, how, I never know. But this other matter I want to talk



He returned to try several poses, some standing, some looking back over a shoulder.

to you about is vitally important and I must have your advice and help about it.

"Stephen darling, I'm tired of what I am doing. I am so weary of the half-caste, rather shabby, constantly misunderstood sort of existence a woman in my position must lead, no matter how really respectable she is. Also I'm growing older. And now I've a chance to change all this and will, if one thing can be arranged. Such a simple thing over here, such a terrible difficulty to most Americans and especially an American who is still living in the Dark Ages like Father.

"Stephen, there is such a nice Frenchman. Really a lamb, sweet and decent and out of doors—Henri de Sauvigny. He is a marquis, and he has a lovely place in Touraine, just the sort of place you would love to visit," (clever Molly!) "but he is poor, and, simply and frankly, he can't marry me—his family wouldn't let him, for one thing—unless I can bring with me the *dot* that every civilized nation expects except ourselves, and we aren't civilized.



"Living over here, it all seems natural and sensible enough, but I can see Father's face when such a thing is proposed to him, and I want you to intercede for me. I don't want any extra money; I simply want my rights. I merely want Father to calculate out the sum of money of which my present allowance is the interest, and assuming a period of, say, fifteen years,"—Molly, despite her recklessness with other people's pocketbooks was shrewd enough when talking about them,—"pay me the capital that represents. I will sign a paper releasing him from all future obligations concerning me; he's never taken very much, anyway. Stephen, will you help me? It's rather a lost soul asking—"

STEPHEN groaned mentally a second time. Molly, Molly! Pretty as a picture and good in a dozen ways no other Londreth had ever thought of being, but oh, so spendthrift, especially of any sympathetic person's time and emotions.

Who forced her to live in Europe and always in debt? No

one. She lived there because all her life she had never done a single thing save what she thought she wanted. Thought she wanted—not by any means what she actually wanted. Stephen had offered her a home when her smash-up had come, but she had only laughed. Imagine her in Wyoming? Yes, quite so. But then, imagine anyone getting themselves into the state of mind where imagining themselves in Wyoming was impossible?

Why couldn't women take care of themselves? Well, a good many of them did. When they had to, they seemed on the whole better at it than men. But the majority—at least the majority of women of Stephen's class—didn't want to. Sometimes they talked about it beautifully, but if they could avoid it, avoidance was usually accomplished. It was more fun, apparently, not to be sensible. Since God had given them figures and faces, why seek further?

And yet women were extraordinarily capable, more enduring than men. They could dance all night, all day too, ride, play golf, run a car, do everything but (Continued on page 156)



RECENTLY in Havana Gerald Beaumont renewed his acquaintance with the famous Cuban game of jai alai. One does not recall ever having read a story against the background of a contest at that exciting game; but here Mr. Beaumont makes the reader see an international contest as vividly as if one were watching the thrilling scene from a private box.

Illustrated by
Charles Sarka

Alias St. Anthony

By
Gerald Beaumont

BY the margin of a hundred thousand dollars on the wrong side of the ledger, the young Paducah Plunger concluded that his luck was "tired." And so, he strove to rest it.

For three nights he lay in the semi-darkness of his hotel room, staring up at the ceiling, and each night the chandelier turned into a great roulette-wheel that spun unceasingly: *red—black—red—black—red—black*. And there were cards everywhere: Puppyfoot—the Curse of Scotland—even the Death Card!

In vain he closed his eyes. Slumber was denied him. Every nerve in his slim young body tingled; every muscle was rigid. In his ears sounded the thud of flying hoofs, the cries of jockeys as they rounded into the stretch, the clatter of chips, the rattle of silver, the distant murmur of the mob. Phantom voices assailed him, and one after another he identified them all: the droning call of the dice man at Bradley's: "Five's his point. . . .

Make that five! Shooting for five! And he shoots *six*! Lower your sights, brother!"

Then the urbane battle cry of Honest Joe Welling at the Spa: "Money's made round and flat, gentlemen, so you can roll it or stack it! Name your pleasure, and may conscience be your guide!"

The Paducah Plunger had rolled his—rolled it high, wide and handsome. If action was his thirst, he had drunk deep from the well of desire. He had rocked the Gold Coast, turned back the pages of history at Saratoga, and compelled the bookmakers at Belmont to cut prices on the mere rumor of his presence.

The sporting world tingled to the magic of his pseudonym; yet there were few who could boast of ever having seen this latest champion in the lists ruled by Fortuna. Only in the places to which high gamblers were admitted, where there was no limit, and stakes were determined by a nod or a lifted finger, did dealers refer knowingly to a quietly dressed youth with dreamy brown eyes, who was always alone, and who seldom spoke and never smiled. That was the Paducah Plunger; and wherever he appeared, house managers braced themselves grimly.

"Nice fellow," said Johnny Norton, who dealt at Daley's. "Must come from a fine family."

"Sure," agreed the night manager. "Every family tree has its sap. Funny that we aint seen him for three nights. Probably resting his luck. He'll show up again; they all do."

But something more than Kenny Ellison's luck was tired. Sensitive strings of a human violin were keyed too tautly, and the snapping-point was near. That phantom wheel, spinning unceasingly on the ceiling, was the final protest of a tired soul: *Red—black—red—black*; and the thud of hoofs—the rattle of chips and silver—and cards, cards! Nine times he counted the sinister Ace of Spades. . . .

So the Paducah Plunger went to his doctor, who had been expecting just such a call for a long time. Ballantyne was a Kentuckian himself, of the old school of medicine. He was

short and fat, with an India-rubber face that was full of wrinkles and capable of a thousand and one expressions. He used them all during the half-hour he devoted to a thorough examination of Kenneth Ellison, last of a famous family. Finally he put away his stethoscope and slumped into an office chair, spinning it so that he could look out upon the East River.

He sat there a few minutes in silence, then turned. "Well, my boy, God will have to help you now; you've come too late to me. You can't burn the candle at both ends and in the middle as well. Something is going to stop—either your heart or your brain, possibly both. It may come in three days or three weeks or three months, but you can't dodge the debt to nature. . . . Oh, you fool! You pitiful young fool!"

Ellison's brown eyes met and held those of the physician. There was a hint of a smile on the sensitive lips. "Go on

with the deal," said he. "Where do I find God, and what are His office-hours?"

Old Doc' Ballantyne exploded. The eruption lasted twenty minutes, during which a stream of vocal lava flowed uninterruptedly from a fat volcano that swept papers from the desk and belched the doctrine of fire and damnation. The young Paducah Plunger neither spoke nor stirred.

Presently the physician subsided. His face folded into wiser lines. Chubby fingers riffled the pages of a volume on his desk, found what they were seeking, and he turned to Ellison. He quoted from the Songs of Men:

*"Along the sea, across the land, the birds are flying South,
And you, my sweet Penelope, out there somewhere you wait
for me,
With buds of roses in your hair and kisses on your mouth."*



"It is San Antonio, cast up by the sea. Pedro! Come quickly!"

"Go!" said Dr. Ballantyne. "Go anywhere! But sail tonight and stand on deck with the stars overhead, the south wind in your face and the swish of blue waters beneath you. God exists, and so does Penelope. Go search for them, Kenny. It's a thousand-to-one shot, but your only chance."

The fruit steamer *Pastores* rolled southward that night, heading for Cuba, pearl of the Antilles, and long after all other passengers had retired, the Paducah Plunger leaned against the after-rail, contemplating a mystic moon, round as a roulette wheel, and surrounded by the sparkling dice of heaven. He had chosen Havana, not for the reason that those who knew him might have imagined, but because his mother was buried there, and the nearer a man draws to the end, the more likely he is to think of the beginning.

It took four days for Ellison to make the trip, and only four hours for a cable to go from Mike Kalisch, night manager at Daley's, to Señor José Guardo, known in certain circles of Havana as "The Black Pearl." The cable was in code. Deciphered, it read: "Watch for Kenneth Ellison, Paducah Plunger, sailing *Pastores*. Understand sick and off his luck. Fat drop-in if handled right. Regards. Mike."

That was all that was necessary to alter the intended pattern of Destiny. How Mike Kalisch got the tip was his own business. Doctor Ballantyne had not told. The sporting world has its own sources of information.

Instead of God and Penelope, young Ellison's first encounter was with the suave dark-bearded José Guardo, part Greek, part Portuguese, part everything. Bland and courteous, he was none the less the possessor of a past as sinister as the huge *perla negra* that he wore on his finger and by which men identified him. In a fashion, he was a plunger too, but of the ace-in-the-hole variety; wherefore he had many people in his power, and his smile was that of a man who draws a knife.

For three sun-kissed mornings Ellison stood on the wall of the Malecon, staring out to sea, as lonely as a young Napoleon on the Isle of Elba. For three evenings at dusk, while the angelus sounded from the church-towers of Havana, he stood bareheaded in the cemetery, gazing at the inscription on his mother's tomb. On the fourth night, lonely and purposeless, he yielded to temptation and went with José Guardo to the Gran Casino de la Playa, where colored lights play softly on rose-gardens and fountain statuary, and where the call of the dealers sounds above the tinkle of guitars. There he first saw the little white angel of the *jai-alai* courts—Carmelita of the curls—and the story of St. Anthony begins.

Somehow the word had got around that the famous young plunger was in the house. There was a general craning of necks and a buzz of interest, but only the dealers could identify him, and they gave no hint of recognition lest the public follow his play.

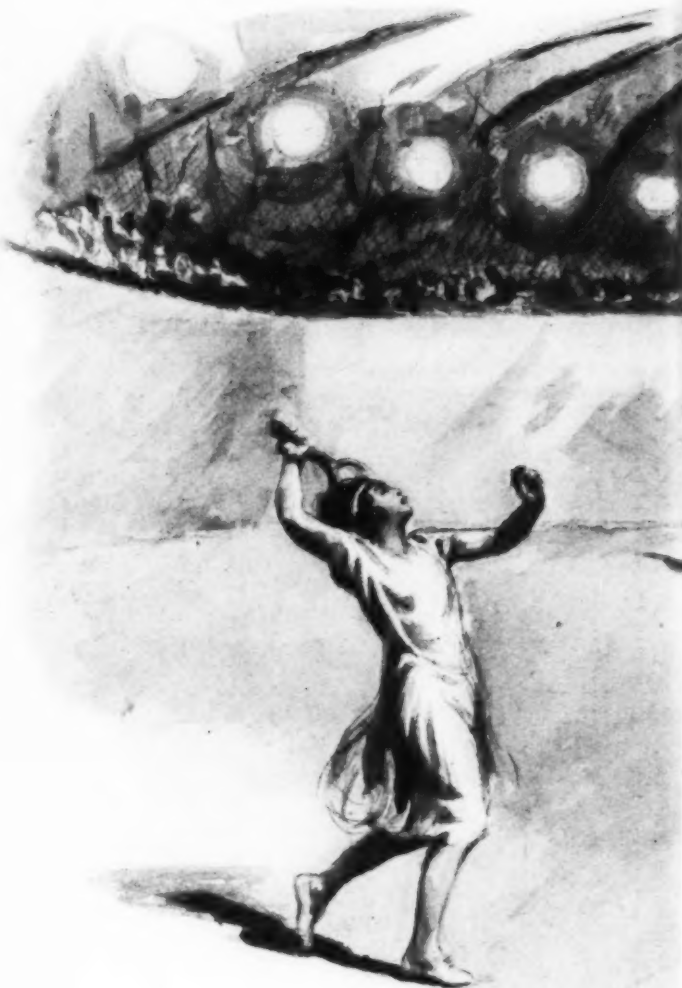
Carmelita, of course, had never heard of such a man. This was her first visit to the Casino, and she had gone there that night, equipped with *ciento pesos* and a little statue of San Antonio, because Pablo, her brother, was ill and money was needed—*mucho dinero!* There was no other way unless she obligated herself further to a man who already desired something in return that he would not get—no, not if she had to kill herself.

You should know little Carmelita, because by nature she was a saint, by appearance an angel, and by profession a *jai-alai* girl—which means that nightly, in the seething arena of the Fronton, men risked huge sums of money on the physical prowess of the little Santa Blanca.

She was seventeen, and looked less—exquisitely molded, with a face of delicate purity, framed by a halo of auburn curls. Castilian blood coursed under ivory skin, and her eyes were as blue as the water that laps the white sands of Marianao.

All her attention was riveted on the roulette-wheel before which she sat. She was playing carefully, and upon her stack of silver dollars reposed the little silver case that contained the statue of San Antonio, patron of the distressed.

But for some reason St. Anthony was off the job that night. The stack of silver dwindled until the last *peso* vanished. It was unbelievable! She sat there a moment, tears flooding her eyes and her lips a-tremble. She pushed back her chair and started to rise.



"Pardon, little lady," said a voice behind her. "You still have your charm."

A hand reached out, picked up the case containing St. Anthony, and placed it on the layout. She looked up quickly and saw that the hand belonged to a young man attired in conventional dinner clothes, an utter stranger with penetrating brown eyes and finely composed features. What impressed her most was the extraordinary pallor of a set face, expressionless as a mask. Had one of the marble statues in the cathedral condescended to speak to her, the effect could not have been more startling.

Instinctively she sought to recover the little case, but the young man laid his hand lightly on her shoulder. He was not looking at her now, but at the dealer. With an almost imperceptible gesture, he touched his dress tie and displayed three fingers. The dealer nodded, interpreting the sign correctly as: "*Three thousand on the black.*" The wheel spun. The little marble rattled against the studs, bounded, and then came to rest.

"Seventeen, odd and black," announced the dealer, and began to pay off. Obeying another gesture from the young man who had touched his tie, the dealer deftly stacked alongside the statue of St. Anthony thirty chips, each worth one hundred dollars. He shoved the pile toward Carmelita. Her dazed eyes sought the figure of her benefactor. But he had disappeared.

"*Válgame Dios!*" she breathed. "What I do now?"

The dealer had learned his stuff in America. "Cash your checks at the office," he advised, "and then run like hell. Don't stop till you get home, and then say a prayer for a real sport."

She arose, fluttering like a bird. "*Gracias, muchas gracias,*



She saw him half rise from his seat. Her eyes went to the ball, and at the same instant there came from Guardo's box a spurt of flame.

señor! But this money—I do not understand. *Mira*, this statue of San Antonio! . . . Truly, it was a miracle!"

"Sure," agreed the man with the eye-shade. "But the show's over. Run along now, and if it's all the same to you, don't bring San Antonio to my table any more."

Half an hour later, with her eyes like stars, she was kneeling at the bedside of Pablo, her brother, once the greatest *jai-alai* player in all Havana. A broken hip had laid him low, and now there were other complications that demanded expert medical attention and much money. She spread the currency on the bed and he insisted on the truth of her story.

"*Hermanito mio*, it could have been none other than San Antonio himself! I had lost the last *centavo* and was in despair. I prayed, Pablo, I prayed. Suddenly he appeared, so pale and spiritual, with burning brown eyes. *Dios*, and so very young and handsome! My heart stood still, Pablo—especially when he placed his hand on my shoulder. See, right here! I feel it still. . . . And that is all, except that San Antonio made them pay me all this money, and then when I go to thank him—he vanishes in a cloud of incense."

Pablo's brows knitted over sunken, feverish eyes. "Carmelita *mia*," he pleaded, "there must be no foolish lies between us. Better you tell the truth, and perhaps I have strength enough left to kill some one—"

"No, no, Pablo! Think no wrong of me. It was exactly as I have said. I swear by the graves of our mother and father! Look!" She seized the little crucifix appended from the bedpost. "On this I take a sacred oath that I have concealed nothing, and all that I have said is true."

The sick boy eyed her a moment, nodded and then patted her curls. "I believe," he murmured. "But it could happen only to thee, *santita mia*! Better that you repay Don Guardo—I do not trust this Black Pearl. What has he said to thee, little one?"

"No matter," she evaded. "He is a pig and the father of pigs, and by the kindness of San Antonio, we pay him back and talk no more of unpleasant things. There will still be money for thee, *hermano mio*—and now that I have not so much cause for worry, I shall play with all my heart. Something tells me that San Antonio is going to help me in the Fronton as he did tonight at the Casino. When the odds (Continued on page 122)

Illustrated by
Will Foster

Nobody



"Steve seems to be head over heels in love with Sybil," she observed.

"SHE was nobody at all before she married," said Mrs. Coakley, with enough emphasis to make it clear that she spoke of a certain kind of felony. "Clyde Barrows picked her up in New York. She was a model—one of those dress mannequins, you know, who show off fashions in the smart shops and at the races and on Easter. She still looks a little like it, don't you think?"

She peered across the room at the person of whom she spoke. It was the room where the wedding-presents were being displayed, and Clyde Barrows' wife was just coming through the doorway. For six years she had been making entrances into the social functions of the city with that active charm which always projected itself in contrast to the slight fussiness of the other women and their airs of possession or shyness. Strangers nearly always asked about her, as Mrs. Coakley's guest had.

The two older ladies paused in their acute appraisal of wedding-gifts to watch her. "There's something different about her, certainly," agreed Mrs. Waterhouse.

No one writing fiction in America sees more clearly into the hearts and souls of the so-called "wise" people of the average American town than Margaret Banning—as was evidenced in her "No Sense of Humor" and "Silk Velvet." And, as in the present story, every such town has its Eve, though perhaps not all the Eves experience the revelation that came to this one on the night that she met the real crisis of her life in her husband's town.

"Well, of course people simply wouldn't have her at first. But Clyde comes from one of our oldest families, and for his sake she was taken up. On the whole, she's done rather well."

"Which is her husband?"

"Her husband? He's the tall, gray-haired man who looks like an army officer. You must meet him. He's charming. Used to be very rich, but I understand that his fortune has been dwindling."

Mrs. Coakley blinked her eyes in confident knowledge of a great deal of information about nearly everyone present. She was a

heavy woman with cheeks that were slightly purplish and made still more unpleasant by a coating of white powder—a woman looking what she was, sixty, ponderous, a steam-roller of money and unquestioned position. Her guest was like her, thinner and more alert, but wearing that same air of conscious dominance. Eve Barrows, pushed by the crowd in the direction of the two women, seemed about to stem the current, then drifted on, stopping now and then, idly and mechanically, to examine something on the long tables spread with their display of incredibly polished silver dishes and almost uncountable kinds of china and glassware.

"How are you tonight, Mrs. Coakley?" she asked when one of her hands was at last held firmly in the older woman's baggy grasp.

"I am very well," said Mrs. Coakley. "You look like a child tonight, Eva. A very pretty child in a very handsome green frock. No wonder your husband spoils you. I don't blame him. This is my guest, Mrs. Waterhouse of Philadelphia."

y at All

By
Margaret Culkin
Banning

"I think I know your son, Mrs. Waterhouse," said Eve; "we've seen something of him this winter since he's been here. Have you come to visit him?"

Mrs. Coakley's eyes contracted, and Mrs. Waterhouse's lips twitched in faint annoyance.

"Yes, I came to see Neil, and my old friend Mrs. Coakley. And to see Mrs. Coakley's charming daughter, who has grown up since I saw her last."

"Lucille is a dear girl," said Eve Barrows; "those young people are having a gay time tonight. Dancing in the marquee. My young sister has drifted out there already."

"I saw your sister," said Mrs. Coakley; "she's very attractive, Eva."

Eve laughed. Being called Eva was one of the penalties of speaking to Mrs. Coakley, who for some reason or other refused to acknowledge her real name. Also there was something in the way Mrs. Coakley accented the attractiveness of her sister that was unpleasant, as if it were a single questionable asset and everyone knew it.

Clyde Barrows joined his wife, and under cover of his gallantries Eve moved on with another group of people. Mrs. Waterhouse's eyes followed her in sharp criticism. She felt instinctive resentment at the familiarity with which Eve had spoken of her son. She didn't like to have attractive young women, who had been models, speak intimately of Neil, especially until he had definitely told her that he was to marry Lucille Coakley. The smooth rising line of Eve's dark hair, its even closeness to her shapely head, the perfection of her skin and her weight, her undiscernible cosmetics, the expertly chosen green evening dress, all militated against her. She was much too perfect—thought Mrs. Waterhouse vaguely—to be quite a lady. Ladies didn't get themselves up like mannequins. They didn't have to. She settled her own archaic collar of diamonds and regarded the toe of her tarnished bronze-beaded slippers. Men liked that sort of woman, of course. It was the lurking danger in men that lured them away from proper attention to their standing and

bank-accounts. One could understand how this Mr. Barrows had been attracted. But he was, as Mrs. Coakley had observed, very obviously a gentleman.

Smirking a little, chuckling heavily, Mrs. Coakley was listening to what Clyde had to say. For at least twenty years she had been in the habit of meeting him at one function or another, but it was not in her philosophy to weary either of proper occasions or proper people.

"You keep young, Clyde," she said; "you look just about as old as you did when the parents of these young people married."

"I wish you could convince me of that." He preened himself perceptibly, and turned to the other lady with the same comment Eve had made. "I know your son, I think, Mrs. Waterhouse? Isn't he located here?"

"Temporarily," said Mrs. Waterhouse. "He's been with the Empire Woolen Mills, but he's to be with the Chicago main house shortly. He will have to leave Cosmopolis. He's made



"Hush!" answered
Eve. "These people
will hear you."



many pleasant friends here, he tells me."

Clyde's attention was courteously with them, but his eyes had followed Eve. She was already halfway down the room, and two or three men had joined her. His glance grew sharp, and hurriedly he tossed off the names of a few important mutual acquaintances to finish his introduction to Mrs. Waterhouse before he went in pursuit of Eve.

"He's always been like that," commented Mrs. Coakley; "always watching her to see that she doesn't make breaks. She will get off in a corner with a lot of men. It's the common streak in her. Her sister is just the same, I hear."

The press grew thicker and more oppressive. Men and women pushed by the tables, the women appraising as they exclaimed and praised, the men indifferent to the particular articles but still impressed by this display of wealth which wealth could call forth.

Eve went on with her husband.

"They're dancing out in the marquee, Clyde; let's go out. It will be cooler."

"Who is?"

"All the young people."

"I wouldn't go out just yet. Let's move about and see a few more people. It's just youngsters out there."

Eve looked down at a table covered with iridescent glassware, goblets of a dozen shapes blown into soap bubbles. She knew he was deftly giving her a cue—that she must not do anything which would make her appear too gay. She must be contained and well-bred and keep on exchanging adjectives about

these dull presents that dull people had sent to keep up a dull tradition. Eve did not phrase it so, even in her mind. She only knew that she was oppressed by the size of the display; she only felt that her feet were young and eager for the music, and that her eyes were tired of looking at shining glass and silver and china.

"I promised to find Sybil," she said, "and I know she's out there."

"Who's Sybil with?"

"Steve Coakley."

"Don't let her make herself conspicuous with him. Mrs. Coakley is almost as fond of that nephew of hers as she is of Lucille. If Sybil thinks she can marry him, we'll have to manage it well. It would be very desirable," said Clyde, "as we both feel. But we must be tactful."

"He's of age," said Eve.

Clyde looked down at his wife. They were alone for a



The guests were friendly; Sybil was a center of attraction. She would be popular, thought Eve.

minute in a corner fronting a special table on which a dozen elaborately illuminated guest-books and desk-sets were displayed. Clyde's face showed a slight worry. When they had first been married, Eve had occasionally been difficult. But not lately. He hoped she wasn't going to be so now. She seemed to have learned to take suggestions and to pay her way with a smile even in the face of rebuff.

"I only meant that if your sister expects to put that marriage over, we mustn't antagonize Mrs. Coakley. She's Steve's closest relative."

"Sybil doesn't expect to put anything over. She's just a child, and the boy is mad about her," countered Eve.

She led the way, and he followed, his face still imperturbably gracious in its greetings, as was that of his wife. In the crowd below they were separated, and when he got through it he saw Eve near the dining-room door talking to an important elderly person. That was all right. Clyde sought the punch-bowl and forgot his wife for the time being.

But Eve did not stay with the important person. She left him and made her way to the marquee where the young people were dancing under softened lights strung across the shelter. Only for a minute she stood watching. Eve was thirty, but she had the figure of eighteen, and all the men liked to dance with her.

She began with Jerry Stewart, whom Clyde disapproved of and who was a fool, but a master dancer. He held her at an

angle which made her free for the music, and they floated off. The night was so clear that the sides of the marquee had been removed and it was like dancing in the open. Through the doors of the house Eve could see people moving about. She felt very far from them.

Pat Badger cut in. Clyde would like that even less, for Pat was younger than Eve and disposed to stay too closely in her train. Clyde hated to see her with younger men. He thought it reflected upon her judgment. But Eve wasted no time on that thought. It was so pleasant to dance and to be desirable as she danced, so that other men competed to be her partners. All the stiffness seemed to go out of her soul. She felt as young as Sybil, her sister, whom she saw drifting through the maze of people in an orange-colored dress that set off her auburn beauty.

Sybil was gold and red and alluringly provocative. Her hair curled, and her mouth tilted sweetly, and she was frankly out to please. Later she might be doomed to be plump, but now her curves were deliciously childlike. Dancing some absurd exaggeration of a passing dance-fancy with Mrs. Coakley's nephew Steve, she looked like a child absorbed in a game.

Some one stopped Badger and claimed Eve.

"My turn now, Eve."

"Hello, Neil," Eve said softly. "I was wondering where you were."

"I was looking for you. I pushed all (Continued on page 116)



Having returned from Europe, whither he went as a slight relief from the nervous strain under which he is compelled to live as Mr. Peters' Boswell, Mr. Benchley takes up his task again with new earnestness and zip, as is evidenced in the present chapter of the Peters chronicles.

For Our Dumb Friends

Illustrated by John Held, Jr.

By Robert Benchley

THERE was no good reason for putting Mr. Peters on the Entertainment Committee for the St. Francis of Assisi Home benefit, unless it was that he could get their printing done cheaply. Certainly Mr. Peters was not known in Dyke as an entertainer. On the contrary.

But he did have an interest in a job-printing concern, and Mrs. Peters was on the Finance Committee of the Home. The function of the Home, by the way, was to see that the dogs, cats, birds and flowers of Dyke County got a square deal in their unequal fight with a commercialized civilization. The bird end of the work more or less took care of itself, but the dog and cat departments were very rushed, and it was Mr. Peters' opinion that there were several dogs living on the bounty of the Home who were not above suspicion in the matter of soldiering, and who might very well be pretending to be older and more infirm than they really were. Mr. Peters even talked at times of starting an official probe into the matter.

He had been put on the Entertainment Committee without his knowledge, but once his name had been emblazoned on the prospectus of the affair, and distributed to the four corners of Dyke, Mrs. Peters said that it would be nothing short of insulting to resign. And whatever Mr. Peters was, he was not insulting. He might kill a man in a quiet sort of way, but he could never get up his courage to insult him.

It was thus that at about four-thirty P. M. of a Wednesday afternoon the unnatural sight of Mr. Peters attending a committee-meeting at the home of Mrs. Arthur Hemson was to be seen. To this day citizens who survived the succeeding weeks

talk of it and comment on the fact that Mr. Peters was not only present at the first meeting but was on time.

Mr. Peters was there at four-thirty, which was the time set on the post-card sent out by Mrs. Hemson; but the other members of the committee apparently took the definition of the hour as some good-natured raillery on the chairman's part, for they appeared anywhere from fifteen minutes to one hour late. In the meantime Mr. Peters had to carry on what passed for conversation with Mrs. Hemson and the one or two early stragglers.

"That was quite a thunderstorm we had last night," said Mrs. Hemson. "All our upstairs windows were open, and things got drenched."

"It was quite a thunderstorm, all right," agreed Mr. Peters. "Early for thunderstorms, isn't it?" he added.

"We had one in April last year, don't you remember?" This valuable meteorological contribution was made by Mrs. MacAlfy, who had just sneaked in, fifteen minutes late.

"That's right, we did." Mr. Peters was not going to start any fight—yet.

"I don't see where the rest can be," worried Mrs. Hemson. "I'm sure I said four-thirty on the card."

"Mr. Whass can't come," announced Mrs. MacAlfy. "I met him in the post office, and he has to take some clients out to Ferncroft. He'll be at the next meeting, sure."

At this point Miss Anna Dorming and Miss Rita Dorming came bustling in, all rosy and fresh and very apologetic. As soon as they were seated, the conversation started in afresh.

"My, what a thunderstorm that was we had last night, wasn't

it?" said Miss Rita, as enthusiastically as if she had brought it on herself. "Anna and I were out in the back yard and got drenched."

"Mrs. MacAlfy was just saying that we had one in April last year, although I should have said it was May."

"No, it was April," corroborated the Misses Dorming in shrill unison. "They were still painting the house."

Mr. Peters looked at his watch. He had left his office half an hour early to attend this meeting, and was beginning to have just the wee shadow of a doubt as to whether or not it had been justified. Mrs. Hemson saw his look, and was galvanized into action.

"Well, it's after five. I don't think we ought to wait any longer for the others. I guess the meeting is called to order."

But the Misses Dorming were still gayly excited over their adventure with the elements and were checking up with Mr. Temerly, who had just arrived, as to who got the wettest; so it was a good ten minutes more before things were in running order.

"The first thing that we have to do is round up all the available material for the benefit, and then we can pick and choose. Mr. Whass has made up a list of all the people we might get to do things, because he has handled these things before. Oh, Mr. Whass isn't here, is he? That's very provoking, because he has all the data that we want. I don't see what we can do today without that list."

"I have to run along," whispered Mrs. MacAlfy, tiptoeing out. "Let me know what I am supposed to do, and I'll do it. We've got people coming for dinner." And like a bird in the night, she was gone.

"Well, I think that what we ought to do first is to line up all



the available material," suggested Miss Anna Dorming. "I think we ought to have as much music as possible on the program, because people like music."

"I don't," said Mr. Peters.

"You don't think so, or you don't like music?" asked Mrs. Hemson in a worried tone. Here was a snag right at the start.

"Is there any need for my staying any longer?" asked Mr. Peters, changing the subject. "You can let me know what the program is going to be, and I'll see to getting it printed."

"We'd love to have you stay and give us your advice, Mr. Peters. You sort of represent the business men of the town,



you know, and it is the business men that we want to please. But if you have to go—"

"It seems to me," put in Miss Rita, with a nasty look at Mr. Peters, "that we have all got to work together in this thing and get some team-work into it. A few of us can't carry the *whole* thing on our shoulders."

Mr. Peters blushed. Or perhaps he just got red. "I have to go now," he said. "Let me know what you want printed, and I'll get it printed."

And he left the committee to do the best it could without Mr. Whass' list, feeling sure that as soon as the door had closed behind him, Miss Rita would have something to say on the manner in which some folks shirked their responsibilities to the community. Mr. Peters was thinking, however, of how once in France he had killed a woman who had just the same neck-measurements as Miss Rita. In fact, he was running over in his mind a few of his group killings, although he had promised Mrs. Peters to be a good boy once they got home to Dyke. "No harm to think about them," said Mr. Peters to himself. "Just to think about them."

It was almost two weeks before Mr. Peters was summoned again before the workers. They had been as busy as bees in the meantime, and twice as offensive. "Please do try to come to the meeting at Mr. Whass' office tomorrow at four-thirty. The matter of printing is to come up." Thus read the post-card from Mrs. Hemson.

"I'll wait and see if there is a thunderstorm tonight," said Mr. Peters. "If there is, I go to no meeting tomorrow. I can talk over thunderstorms down at the office with Dan just as well as at a committee-meeting with Rita Dorming."

"Now, Walter," protested his wife, "you know you said you'd do it for them. And you haven't been to a meeting since the first one—Mrs. Hemson told me so yesterday. 'I guess your husband doesn't care much about making the benefit a success,' she said. 'Oh, yes, he does, Mrs. Hemson,' I said. 'He's just very busy right at this time.'"

So Mr. Peters was at Mr. Whass' office at four-thirty the next day. Mr. Whass was a real-estate agent, and had several people in with him at the time; so Mr. Peters, being the first member to arrive, sat in an anteroom and read the "Realtors' Guide" until a quarter of five.

"Sorry to keep you out here so long, Mr. Peters," said Mr. Whass finally, "but business is business, you know."

"You never said a truer word," said Mr. Peters.

At this juncture the Misses Dorming arrived, in their customary state of breathless excitement. They were followed by Mrs. Hemson, the chairman, loaded down with brief-cases and a

sample poster sketched in by her son, who had never taken a lesson in his life.

"I guess that we can sit in here now," said Mr. Whass. "In here," turned out to be Mr. Whass' own private office, with pictures of real-estate developments on the walls. They had barely seated themselves when Mr. Whass' telephone rang.

"Hello. . . . Yes. . . . This is Mr. Whass speaking. . . . Yes. . . . Yes. . . . Yes. . . . Surely. . . . Yes. . . . Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Thurton, those people told me that you could either get a garage built in, or use one of the neighbors' garages for a small rental. . . . No, I didn't say there was a garage already there. . . . No, you must have misunderstood me. . . . I said there was a *place* for a garage. . . . Yes. . . . Yes. . . . No, Mr. Thurton, you must have misunderstood me."

While this was going on between Mr. Whass and Mr. Thurton, the members of the committee were talking in hushed voices.

"Been caught in any more thunderstorms lately, Miss Dorming?" whispered Mrs. MacAlfy.

Miss Dorming giggled and said that while she hadn't exactly been caught in any thunderstorms, she probably would have been if there had been any thunderstorms to catch her, as she had been out-of-doors every minute.

The matter of Mr. Thurton's garage having been settled unsatisfactorily for Mr. Thurton, Mr. Whass was now ready to attend to the business of the committee.

"We have got a tentative program drawn up at last," he announced, "and if there are no objections I will read it."

"I object," said Mr. Peters, but nobody heard him.

"The St. Aloysius Boys' Band will open the show," began Mr. Whass, "and they will be followed by Arthur Gee, who has some very good sleight-of-hand tricks which he does. Then Mrs. Rollins will sing; and then, for No. 4, if we can get him, will be Dr. Masterly, who does clay-modeling right there on the stage. We are not sure of Dr. Masterly, as he may have to be in Cleveland that week. Then the Boys' Band will give another selection, and that will close the first half. We will open up the second half with the Boys' Band again, and then comes the sketch which Mrs. Hemson is rehearsing. How is the sketch coming, Mrs. Hemson?"

"Well, we are a little discouraged about Miss Parson's end of it. She has been sick so much. We may have to get some one else to play *Myrtis* at the last minute. But we are working very hard on it, and otherwise it looks very good."

"That's fine!" said Mr. Whass. "The sketch, then, and after that Mr. Thor and Mrs. Pesterson will sing. Now we need something right in here that will make them laugh."

"Why not have a committee-meeting?" suggested Mr. Peters.

"Well, we'll leave that space open," said Mr. Whass, who hadn't quite got Mr. Peters' meaning and didn't think it worth while going into. "Then there will be the wand-drill by the Girl Scouts, and the Boys' Band will close the show."

Everyone agreed that the program sounded fine, and a copy of it was given to Mr. Peters to have printed. When he came home that night, Mrs. Peters noticed that he was in unusually high spirits, and it worried her. . . .

To the proofs which Mr. Peters submitted was added the missing comedy number, which turned out to be Imitations of Famous Characters of Dyke, promised by George Aspic, who really was awfully good at that sort of thing when he was sober. A subcommittee was appointed to see that George was sober. Thus everything was considered set and the program definitely lined up, and the corrected proofs sent to the printer at four P. M. on Tuesday.

On Thursday at noon Mrs. MacAlfy called Mr. Peters up to say that they would have to change the order a little, and that a song-number would have to be substituted for Dr. Masterly's modeling act, as Dr. Masterly had found out that he would have to be in Cleveland after all.

"And anyway," added Mrs. MacAlfy, "we ought really to have asked Alice Ranney to sing in the first place."

"You (Continued on page 147)



Joe.
One of Jocelyn's Gang



Jack Jocelyn.
Faith's Father



Faith Jocelyn



That Jocelyn Girl

By
Samuel Merwin
*Realized in Pictures by
James Montgomery Flagg*

Frank Watson
(Blanco, the Clown)



Grace Dealing



Charlie Jackson,
the Circus Press Agent





FAITH JOCELYN puzzled much about her father, whom she knew only as an interesting-looking, grayish man, low-voiced, masked, remote. He was always away; winters in Havana or South America, summers anywhere and everywhere about the States.

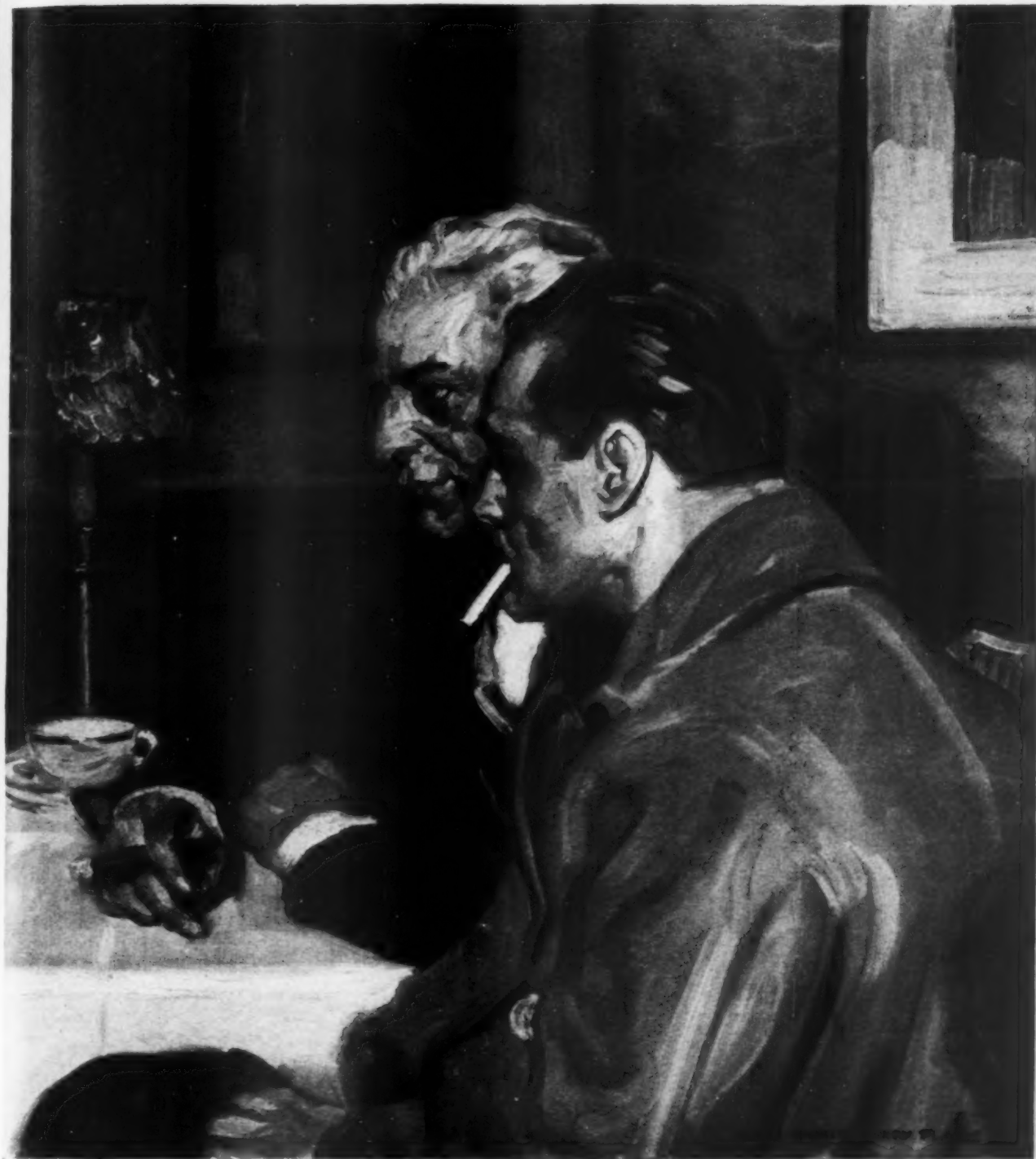
Usually twice a year, in November and April, Faith met him for luncheon. Aunt Ellen used to take the child to his hotel, but herself waited outside. At their last meeting a young man named Joe had been present—a man quiet, like her father, with a red scar across the left cheekbone that was somehow fascinating to Faith.

Aunt Ellen, who was the only mother the girl had known, kept track of John Jocelyn's peregrinations and forwarded Faith's

dutiful letters. He wrote seldom, but regularly sent checks. Thus Aunt Ellen had been able to keep the child in excellent schools and summer camps.

The years passed; Faith grew into a slender, handsome girl of eighteen, with vividly dark coloring. The event of Class Day at Miss Wilberforce's school was the Flower Parade; and Faith, dressed as a violet, made a charming figure. Directly afterward they gave her a telegram. Aunt Ellen had suffered a stroke. And Faith, who had never within her memory encountered death, hurried to her aunt's side in the modest Harlem flat that had been their home. . . .

Faith sat alone in the simple apartment. She had that day seen Aunt Ellen's body lowered into the ground. Now it was



evening. Outside her windows the great city rumbled and glittered and mocked.

She had eaten all by herself in a dreary cafeteria. There a man had spoken to her; another had followed. She couldn't help crying. But now the thing was to find her father. Aunt Ellen had never uttered his name. And not one scrap of paper in Aunt Ellen's desk bore it.

Grace Dealing, Faith's school roommate, called upon her there, urging her to come straight to their home. That was kind, Faith realized, and she accepted the invitation, but she could not say, just yet, when she would come. After Grace had gone, Faith searched through Aunt Ellen's old desk once more. This time a typewritten paper caught her eye. At the top were the words,

"LONGMAINE'S WORLD-EMBRACING SHOWS," with, below, a compact list of cities and dates.

Faith stared. Her father, it would appear, traveled with the circus! Then her startled gaze rested on one line. Longmaine's would be, the next day, this line informed her, not four hours' ride away.

Her spirits rising, Faith at once determined to go there. She would talk the problem over with her father, then return to the Dealings'.

So, it came about that in the morning, confused, nerves tense with excitement, she caught a westbound train at Hoboken; and there, as she was looking for a seat, she found the young man named Joe smiling at her.



"WELL!" he cried. "Hello!" And the scar deepened in color. "Going to see your dad, eh? So'm I. But Jack Jocelyn wouldn't want to have his daughter riding in a day-coach like this."

He led her back to the Pullmans and secured a drawing-room. Timidly she watched as he closed the door and then took the seat beside her.

"Does Jack know you're coming?" he inquired with a narrow look.

She shook her head. She mistrusted him; still, he was her father's friend. He pressed a flask on her, and when she declined, drank deeply himself. Later, abruptly, he asked: "Look here! How much do you know?"

She couldn't answer that. "Well," said he, mysteriously, "just stick with me. I'll handle it." He slipped an arm about her shoulders, but she moved away. She felt frightened. Yet many of the boys she knew drank and petted. She tried to think fairly. He ordered lunch served in the room; whereupon she, in a flutter of courage, fastened the door open. He chuckled.

When they had disembarked, he looked at her with a sinister smile. "Get this right, kid. You can't see Jack until after the matinée. Keep your mouth shut, and you'll make no trouble. Leave everything to me."

They stood at the edge of the lot. The parade was breaking up after its return from the streets. Pennants fluttered above the vast tents. The air was a babel of clashing sounds; a blaring



side-show band near by, and a big band farther off; barkers; peanut- and lemonade-vendors screaming their wares. The care-free crowd streamed in between the gaudy banners, knotting tightly about the ticket-wagon.

"I don't come on the lot much," said Joe, queerly. "But I'll meet you after the performance right over there, at the end of the banners. It'll be your one chance." He looked about. "See that tall fellow? That's Frank Watson. Blanco, you know, the star clown."

"Oh, I've heard of Blanco!"

"Sure. He's famous. Great artist. —Hey, Frank!" The man under the clown's garb was of big, athletic frame, and thoughtful blue eyes were not concealed by the make-up. "Thought you

wouldn't mind passing a good-looking girl in, Frank. Meet Miss Johnson."

"That's not my name!" cried Faith.

Joe, with a mock bow and a blithe "See you later," strode away and at once disappeared in the crowd.

"It's Faith Jocelyn. I've come to find my father," the girl went on.

She felt the blue eyes taking her in. She liked this man. Surprisingly, he wasn't old at all. "If you'll wait here," he said, shyly, "we'll find a couple of seats. I don't dress for the show till three-thirty; this is just my parade make-up." In an astonishingly short time he was back in street dress. She saw a rugged, kindly face.



THIS Frank Watson, as the clown Blanco was known in private life, seemed to Faith no other than a big, shy boy. And so, when they were seated, Faith surprised herself by telling him eagerly of her school life, of Aunt Ellen's death and her ensuing predicament.

At first he merely listened to Faith's simple story; but afterward, when the horde of lesser clowns were tumbling riotously about the arena, he spoke, hesitatingly, of himself, of how he watched human creatures on the streets, probing through every physical mannerism to the hidden nervous motive. Plainly he loved his work, lived in it.

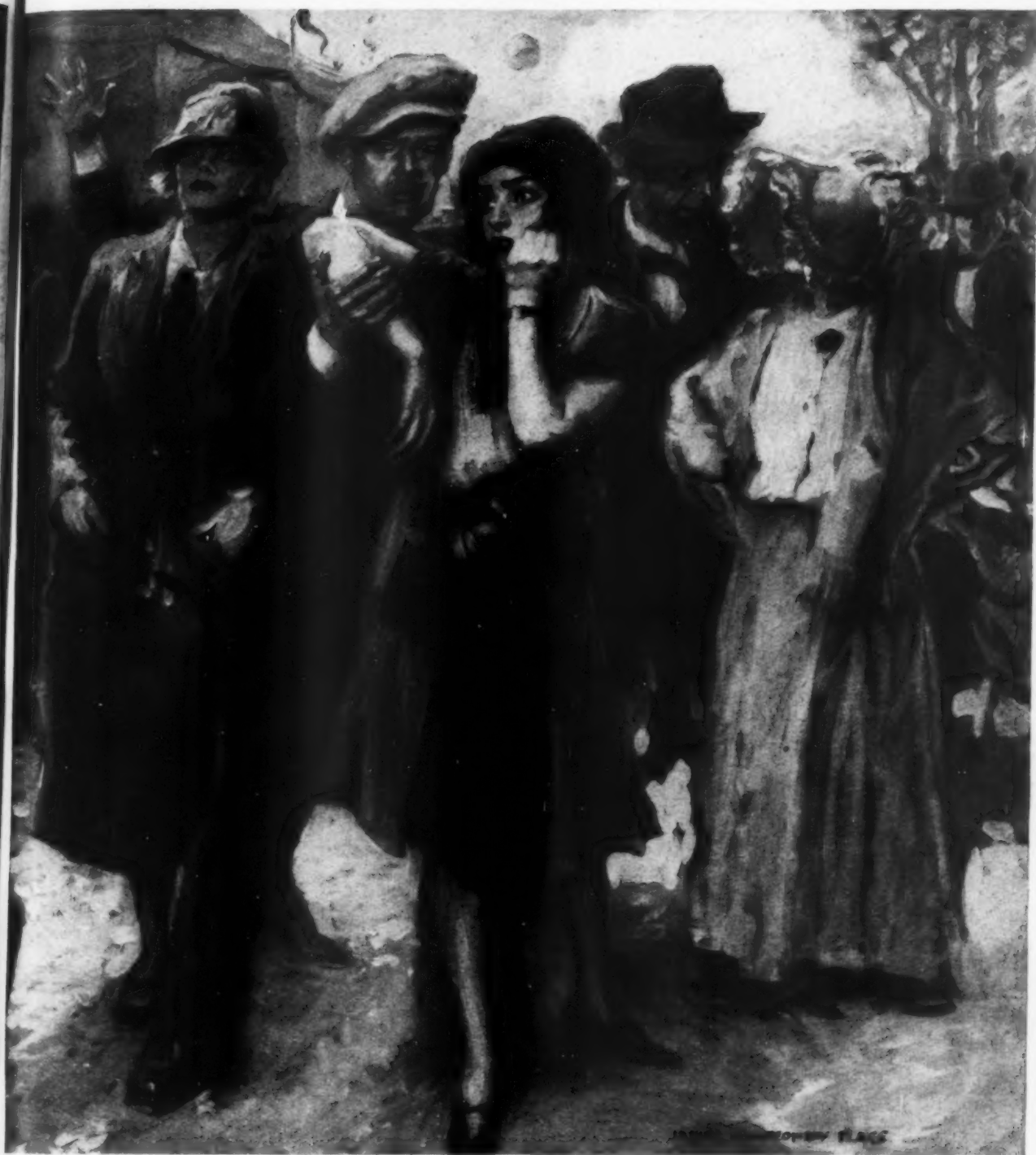
Almost like old friends these two bared their problems and their dreams until, when Frank left to dress, he said this, gently:

"If you should have any—well, trouble—be sure to look me up, wont you?"

Then he was gone; and—she wondered. Shortly he appeared on the central stage, all white, with hugely grotesque leather feet, and there caricatured the essential human so unerringly that the immense dusty tent rocked with laughter. Faith forgot for the moment the dread that had been mounting in her heart; indeed, she was moving out beyond the big red ticket-wagon before her smile faded. There stood Joe, beyond the blatant banners, waiting.

"It's just a chance," said he. "If you see him, don't speak or move."

The crowd streamed past toward the street-cars and parked



automobiles. The side-show barkers labored noisily, and the little band blatted.

Suddenly the girl felt Joe's hand grip her arm. Her eyes darkly searched the throng. They rested on a big, red-faced man wearing a wide felt hat, and a diamond in his shirt-front. Then she saw her father, moving with a leisurely dignity athwart the full current of perspiring folk.

At once Faith started forward, intent on making herself known to her father, only to be jerked roughly back. She heard Joe's harsh whisper: "Do you want to land him in prison?"

The progress of the big man was checked momentarily by a group of others pushing through, John Jocelyn among them. Mr. Redface, evidently a rough personage, came on again; then

a friend spoke quickly, and he looked down. His diamond was gone. He cried out profanely.

"That's that," muttered Joe to Faith. "You wont see your dad tonight."

"But I must!" she breathed. "What has he to—"

"Simple enough." Joe smiled in his queer way. "He's got the rock. He's off in his car by now. He'll turn up tomorrow at the new stand."

Faith stood in breathless horror, trying to realize that her father was a thief. *(Life brought even greater amazements to Faith Jocelyn then. Her fascinating story, told by Samuel Merwin and revealed in pictures by James Montgomery Flagg, will continue in the next, the August, issue.)*

Silver Mounted

By

Will James

"HOWDY!" We turned at the voice of a stranger who, outside and setting on a good-looking bay horse, was looking at us through the camp's only window, and smiling.

Strangers was mighty scarce in that country, and mighty welcome; and when Long Tom, our foreman, returned that stranger's howdy, it was natural-like followed with "Turn your horse loose and come on in."

It was a while later when a shadow was thrown across the door and the stranger walked in, and still a-smiling begin unsnapping his bat-wing chaps.

"We just got in a few minutes ago," says Long Tom, "and the cooky's got 'er all ready. Go ahead and wash up; we'll wait for you."

The stranger had gone to the wash-bench outside when Little Joe leaned my way and in a low voice asks: "Say, Bill, did you see the boots that *hombre's* wearing? And look at them chaps," he goes on while fingering of 'em. "Soft as silk, and with silver mountings."

I sure had noticed them boots; they was the kind any cowboy would glance at more than once. The flower design that was on 'em, in inlaid colored leather and bordered with many rows of fancy stitching, would attract a blind man. The soft kangaroo vamp with the well shaped, not too high heel sure had my eye too. The chaps was of gray soft leather, the wing covered with leather designs, and pure silver ornaments on the belt and more along the wing.

"It'd be a shame to use an outfit like that in this sunburnt lava and sage-brush country," says Joe. "It'd sure skin the pretty spots off it in no time."

The stranger, all washed and hair combed, walked in again,



He reeled that pony and made a fool out of him.

When you read a cow-country story or "piece," as he calls 'em, by Will James, you may be sure you're reading the real thing; the same with the pictures he draws. His cowboy books, all illustrated by himself, have won the highest of critical praise and as a result Will is, as he says, "sittin' pretty."

Illustrated
by the Author

and all of us trailed over to the long table to partake of the last meal of the day. The talk was as usual, and not ruffled any by the presence of the stranger. Once in a while he'd inquire some about the country, and his talk fitted in well. Before the meal was over, and without asking any questions, we had him figured out as a rider from the prairie countries, but we wasn't sure. A few

days would tell, and we hoped he'd stick around, for we'd sort of took a liking to his ways, fancy outfit and all.

It was early the next morning when a few of us boys was at the corrals and rolling that day's first cigarettes. The *remuda* hadn't got in yet, and while waiting we run across the stranger's rig. A real fancy saddle it was, all hand-carved and weighed down with silver, and on the "*rosaderos*" was letters saying: "*For First Prize in Bucking Contest.*"

Them carved letters sort of identified the stranger to us, but there was other things about the outfit that was a puzzle and which didn't match none at all. Like for instance, there was a real honest-to-God-well-made saddle with a neat little silver horn, bare and for tying, and instead of having the hard-twist grass rope coiled up on the side of that saddle, and which was the only kind that belonged there, there was a sixty-foot rawhide *reata*, plumb useless, and not at all fitting with it nor the slick horn that was on it.



The spinning loop shot out, never losing its circle, and caught that pony under the chin.

His bridle didn't agree no better; the headstall belonged to Wyoming, the bit to Mexico, and the rawhide reins to the California Spanish. None ever go together, and it was sure a puzzle to us how that waddy worked or where he was from.

But we was soon to know. The *remuda* was being drove in the big corrals, and about that time we spots Long Tom coming down with the stranger. Our hopes that he'd stick around went up to the top as we seen the foreman pointing out a string of ponies for him to ride; and seeing it was settled that he was going to be with us for a spell, we all went after our ropes and begin snaring our ponies for that morning's ride.

Our ponies was all caught, saddled, and ready to "top off" when we see the stranger circling a rope over his head and trying to run the horse he wanted with a "Missouri throw." He was using a braided cotton rope, the kind that's used in spinning, and we figgered the rawhide *reata* that was on his saddle was only for an ornament.

To begin with, we seen he was no roper, not while he was on the ground, anyway. Long Tom watched the proceedings of the whirling rope for quite a spell; he didn't want to tell the new hand not to whirl his rope in a corral full of horses, on account he figgered the stranger ought to know that without being told, but he didn't like to see the ponies getting all jammed up and skinning their hips on the corral-poles, either. He was just about to flip his rope and catch the stranger's horse for him, when he stopped and seen that *hombre* do a funny thing. The stranger, after missing three or four throws in the "Missouri swipe" fashion, had coiled up his rope and built another loop; and instead of whirling it this time, he begin to spin it. He kept a-spinning it till the horse he wanted circled around the corral and came within roping distance, and about that time the spinning loop shot out, never losing its circle, and caught that pony under the chin, and then the loop settled over his ears.

Long Tom and all of us grinned, looked at one another and shook our heads. The throw the stranger had just made matched

well with his fancy boots, chaps and saddle: it was fancy too. But it seemed like there was no end of puzzling things about that stranger, and the next to happen was after we'd topped off our ponies and all of us was ready to line out of the corral gate. I was somewhat surprised, after I made my horse quit sweeping the corral with his foretop, to see that the new hand hadn't saddled his horse yet; he was just a-hanging on to him wondering what to do, and seemed like looking around for something he couldn't find. Finally he looked at Long Tom, who was setting on his horse and waiting.

"Is there a chute I can saddle this horse in?" he asks.

The horse he'd caught was a spooky little sorrel and a fighter, and he wouldn't let the stranger come any closer than a safe ten feet from him. He wasn't the worst horse that outfit had, not by a long shot, but he wasn't the gentlest either. The foreman sized the stranger up for a spell and finally says:

"We saddle our horses in the middle of the corral or anywhere we get 'em out here."

I looked at Long Tom as he said them last two words, and had a hunch right then that he knowed what kind of a man he was talking to. That was more than the rest of us could figger out.

Having no time to waste, Long Tom got off his horse, walked over to the stranger and told him to get his saddle. While the stranger was gone, the foreman flipped the loose end of the rope around the spooky sorrel's front feet and hobbled him; then he reached for the saddle that'd been brought up, put it on the slick back and cinched 'er up.

We felt sort of sorry for the stranger as that went on, for we could see that he didn't know what to do with his hands, and he just sort of kept fidgeting around, careful not to look at any of us; but he brightened up some as Long Tom handed him the bridle reins and told him, "It's up to you now."

The stranger seemed glad of it, and the way he climbed that pony showed he was aching to prove that he was some entitled to that fancy outfit of his.

It was when the little sorrel bogged his head and went after the stranger that we got another surprise, and which made the puzzle all the harder to figger out. The stranger had seemed at home from the time the horse side-winded out of his tracks, and it was then we understood how it was he brightened up when Long Tom handed him the reins and told him to go ahead. That boy could ride.

He reefered that pony and made a fool out of him as well as Little Joe could, and Joe was about the best rider in the outfit. It made a mighty pretty sight too, to watch that new hand ride on that fancy outfit. The silver was a-shining to the sun at every curve of the horse's body; the long hand-carved tapaderos, along with the wide wings of the rider's chaps, sort of made the movements of the horse and man mighty easy to watch; and even old bronc-fighting Long Tom had to stand there like the rest of us and admire.

Finally the show was over, and a little too soon to suit us, but we figgered there'd be some more later as that outfit sure had plenty of mean ponies. We all filed out of the corral, and the stranger amongst us a-riding along like he was sure a credit to that outfit he was setting on.

We loped out of camp, Long Tom in the lead and never looking back. Three or four miles out, the ponies was brought down to a walk; the gait was kept to that for a mile or so, and into a long lope we went again. A knoll twelve miles or so from camp was reached, and there Long Tom "scattered the riders" different directions—two up a creek, two more over a ridge, and so on till all the boys was scattered in fan shape to hunt and run in whatever horses was in that country.

THE "Double O" was a horse outfit, and run over ten thousand head of the finest horses a man wants to see. It took a big range to run that many horses, and the proof that it was big and also good was by the kind of horses that was raised there. They showed they had all the chance in the world to develop and grow full size, and they was wild, as wild as any horse ever gets, and if it wasn't that they was corraled once or twice a year, they'd soon turn into renegades, for even as it was, it took a mighty good hand who knowed horses, and he had to be well mounted, before he could turn a bunch of them and bring 'em toward the corrals.

As Long Tom scattered the riders, I'm thinking that most every one of us wished to be "paired off" with the stranger: he was such a surprising cuss, and if he could sashay horses like he rode the sorrel, that'd sure be another show well worth watching.

Most of the riders rode away two by twos till there was only me and Joe, the stranger and Long Tom left. Then the foreman spoke again.

"Bill," he says, "you, and you" (pointing to the stranger) "take Lone Mountain; and me and Joe here'll skirt around Rye Patch."

I grinned at Joe and rode away, the stranger for my pardner. We rode along a-talking of nothing in particular and everything in general. I was wanting awful bad to get an inkling so as to clear the puzzle he was to me and all of us, but no hinting would make him give any information, and it sure never came to me to come right out and ask him, 'cause you can never tell what a feller's hiding in his upper story or what he's trying to keep as *past*.

To sort of make him feel that I wasn't wanting him to talk on himself unless he wanted to, I turned the confab towards the present and says:

"You want to watch that sorrel you're riding; he aint through with you yet, and is apt to bog his head and go after you just when you least expect or want him to. But," I says afterwards, "I guess you don't mind that."

I expected him to grin at me in a way that'd show he wasn't caring what the sorrel done or when he done it, and there is where I got another surprise; for the stranger instead of grinning as any cowboy would at my remark, seemed to turn pale, and then I noticed how he wasn't setting straight up and free as he had when first leaving the corral. He was setting close now, and with a short tight holt on the reins.

We skirted the foot of Lone Mountain and then wound our way up it; it was a steep and high old mountain and could always be depended on for a couple of bunches of wild, high-land-loving ponies. We was halfway up, and I was keeping my eyes peeled to see the wild ones *first*, when on a ridge that run to the mountain, and away up, I spots the buckskin rump of one horse and I figgers there's a bunch with him.

I stops my horse and points his whereabouts to the stranger and asks: "See that horse up there?"

"Yes," he says, and he was looking away to one side of where the buckskin was; he wasn't seeing him at all.

"Well—anyway," I says, "you keep about the middle of this mountain, and when I start the bunch, I'll head 'em down your way, and you can keep 'em going on down towards the flat."

"All right," he says.

"Daggone queer," I says to myself as I rode away. "He's a top hand in some things, and a pure greenhorn in others. Now, he's never hunted stock much, or he'd sure seen that horse up there; and then again, his acting scared on a horse he *knows* he can ride sure is past me figgering out."

I maneuvered around till I got on the other side of the bunch I'd spotted, and when I got to the right place, I showed up sudden and fogged in on 'em so quick that them ponies just got scared and flew straight away to where I wanted 'em to go—they didn't have time to stop and parley on how would be the best way to lose me; they just went.

There was about fifteen head in the bunch, and one "marker" amongst 'em identified 'em as Double O horses. I camped on their tail for a ways and till I made sure they was headed past where the stranger should be; he'd keep 'em from doubling back up the mountain, I figgered, and fog 'em on down to the flats as I'd told him to.

Taking another look at the bunch so as to make sure of their going straight down the mountain, I sat on one rein, brought my running bronc' to a crowhopping standstill, and then made him head back up the mountain. There was another bunch I'd spotted up there. I circled around and on up, losing no time 'cause I wanted to get that second bunch and throw it with the first so as I could help the stranger in case he needed it; but realizing what a big head start he had on me, I had no hopes much of seeing him and the first bunch till I reached camp.

It took me quite a while to reach the top of that mountain; it was steep and high, and I didn't want to rush my horse too much on account of the run I figgered I'd have to make to get that bunch in. I let him take a good breathing spell when the top was reached, and while I uncinched my saddle and cooled his back a little, I took a look down the flat away below me for a sign of the dust the first bunch I'd started would be making. I had a mighty good view of the country from up there; it all looked like a big map a-stretching with the edges petering out into atmosphere. I could see the fringe of cottonwoods by the camp we'd left that morning, and the creek a-shining in the sun, but in all that landscape I couldn't see no dust. I wondered if the stranger could of got his bunch to camp already and while I was climbing the mountain; it could happen easy enough, 'cause there was nothing slow about them ponies once you got after 'em, and then again that stranger was so surprising, he might be a wizard at running wild ponies.

I GOT on my bronc' and lined him out in a fast walk towards the other bunch. I didn't see no more chance of having the interesting company of the stranger, and I was sorry for that. Anyway, I kettled the other ponies from the right side and fogged 'em on down a long ridge that stretched away out on the flat. It was a fine place to run, and my horse was a-fighting his head to get in amongst the bunch that was raising the dust ahead of him. All was going fine and to order, and I figgered at that speed I'd be in camp in a short spell, when in the cañon to the left I sees a big dust and another bunch of running ponies. They was headed straight up the mountain and the opposite direction I was going, and then I got a glimpse of the buckskin horse, the one I'd first spotted, and then the marker which told me plain that there was the bunch I'd turned over to the stranger.

"What t'hell, now!" I says as I rode off the edge of the ridge I was on and into the cañon. I was hoping to turn 'em and throw 'em in with my bunch. The next half a mile I covered was sure no bridle-path, and the speed I made it in went to show what a daggone fool a feller can be when getting het up on the subject. I'd turned my horse off into a straight down run, and the little shelves of shale rock that was here and there was all that kept us from going down faster than we did.

But I got in the cañon before the bunch passed me, and that was the cause of my hurry, for if the bunch had ever got above me, I'd just as well waved my hat at 'em and let 'em go. I'd never been able to turn 'em.

As it was, they'd had to go through me to get away, and they'd been handled enough so they didn't try it. They turned, went down the cañon a ways; then when the sides of the ridge wasn't

The speed I made went to show what a fool a feller can be when het up on the subject.



so steep no more, I turned 'em once again and up on the ridge where the other bunch was still going strong and the right direction.

Both bunches'd had quite a bit of running; they wasn't so hard to handle no more, and I had no trouble much getting 'em all together. All was going fine once more; my bronc' had quit fighting his head and a-trying to get in amongst the horses; he was glad to just lope along behind a ways and just follow 'em.

I loosened up on the *mecate* (hair rope) reins and rolled me a cigarette; then it comes to me: "What's become of the stranger?"

I looked at the country around as I rode, but no sign of him was anywheres; then I looked at the bunch which was keeping ahead of me about a quarter of a mile, and running my eye over 'em, I thought I seen something a-shining to the sun and on one pony's back; something else was a-flapping on each side of him.

And doing some tall wondering, I rode a little faster so as to have a closer look.

It was hard to make out through the dust, but as I looked on and squinted I finally made out the shape of a saddle; but what bothered me was them things a-shining on top. Then I come near kicking myself for forgetting and being so dumb; them shining things was *silver*; it was the stranger's saddle, and under it was the sorrel he'd rode so well in the corral that morning!

I stopped my horse as the thought came to me that somewheres was the stranger, afoot, and maybe with some bones broke; for when a rider sees a horse packing an empty saddle out on the range, it sure sets him to thinking. A man can petrify out there and never be found only maybe by coyotes or magpies. Fifteen or twenty miles is a long ways with a smashed-up leg.

Of course the stranger might be all right, I thought, but there's no telling where he may be laying and (Continued on page 133)



"Just because a man serves his country is no excuse for murder, is it?"

AMERICAN novels of exceptional distinction were "The Family" and "The Harbor," by Ernest Poole. The simplicity of their writing was very highly praised by the critics, and it is the same simplicity that one encounters in these very short, poignant stories that Mr. Poole has recently written for this magazine.

By

Ernest Poole

The Bandit

Comes Home

Illustrated by J. W. Collins

FOR a week I had been visiting a friend in the Green Mountains. It was a clear, still November night, and the sloping fields and pastures lay glittering white with snow and frost beneath a big round hunter's moon. A little after dinner, the telephone-bell was sharply heard, and my friend went to answer it; and presently he came back and said:

"They've got that young bandit."

They had been after him for some time, and the newspapers had been filled with his story. Born and raised up in Vermont, he had gone to France with the A. E. F., and after a wild career in the War, had found it hard to settle down. Arrested in Connecticut with a stolen automobile, he had served for a year in State's prison there, and had then escaped and come up here, for a glimpse of his good-looking young wife, on his way to Canada. But over in the county seat about twenty miles away, he'd been recognized; the old chief of police had tried to arrest him; the outlaw had shot the poor old officer and had made off into the hills. And since then, for eight days and nights, several hundred mountaineers had hunted him. There had been a snow blizzard during that time.

"Where did they get him?" I inquired.

"Right close by," my friend replied, "—only about five miles

from here. A farmer up the mountain-side heard a noise out by the barn, and sneaked back with his old rifle and shot the fellow—broke his arm. They've got him down in the village now, waiting for the sheriff from Barre."

We motored down that night to the village—a peaceful-looking little place, with its church and score of white frame houses facing on a winding stream, with mountains looming all about. But as we came into the village store, the peace of the night was broken by a nasal, hard, excited voice. Around the tall stove sat a dozen men, silently listening to the account of a thin, round-shouldered, leathery-faced New Englander, who nervously moved about as he talked. With a gleam of exultation in his small blue watery eyes, he was saying, as we entered:

"So I guess that thousand-dollar reward is 'bout due to come my way!" And then once more, for our benefit, he repeated his story from the start. "'Twas my old bear-trap done it," he said. "When I'd finished milkin' tonight, I jist happened to lay eyes on it hangin' up thar in the barn. An' that give me my idea. I'd heard this feller was comin' our way—an' bein' the only man up thar, I wa'n't takin' any chances. I knew he'd be huntin' shelter tonight, so I left the barn door open a mite, an' set the trap in front of it, an' hid it nice with straw an'

snow. An' along toward eight o'clock, as I was 'bout thinkin' of goin' to bed, I heard a noise that made me jump. I run for the kitchen an' opened the winder—an' there he was, by golly, trapped! When he saw me, he up with his arm! But his pistol-shot went wild—an' I blew out the kitchen lamp, an' got my old rifle an' sneaked to the winder—keepin' down close to the floor! An' I jest took my time about it, an' I got him in the arm!"

As the excited mountaineer went on with his grim narrative, I caught sight of the young prisoner, sitting back behind the stove. His right arm dangled at his side, roughly bandaged. His left leg, bruised by the steel jaws of the trap, was stretched out in front of him, and the gray sock showed red with blood. His clothes were wet and badly torn; his lean white face was gaunt with pain; his head was sunk; his eyes were closed. But as the account of his capture continued, once he looked up with a quick bitter smile—and suddenly I discovered that the man was blind in one eye.

A few minutes later the door from the street was abruptly opened; and a huge, short, broad-shouldered man, in a heavy fur coat, came into the store. He was grizzled and gray, with a ruddy face and big wide jaws, which set like a vise, as he looked quickly about the group.

"Hello, folks. Where's your prisoner?"

"Good evening, Doc—he's right back there."

This answer had come in a low, tense voice, from the old storekeeper. A muscle on the Doctor's face seemed to give a sharp little twitch, but the next instant his expression was impassive as before. Dropping his bag, he threw off his fur coat and went to the man at the back of the room. An absolute silence had come over our group. I did not notice it at first—it was covered by the gruff low questions coming from behind the stove, as the physician examined the wounded arm. But when he brought out bandages, called for a basin of hot water and started the work of dressing the wound and of setting the broken bone, moment by moment the silence among those listening mountaineers grew intense and palpable. I glanced around at the faces of the natives and of my friend, and suddenly I grew aware of some queer deep tension there, which grew almost unbearable. The Doctor's back was turned to us, and his brief questions were so low that we could barely hear them now. But sitting by a window, presently I heard the voice of a small boy just outside:

"There he is. That's him, back there. They say he's got a busted arm." Then a girl's voice, awed and thrilled: "Don't it make your blood run cold? Him once our school teacher!" she said. I turned with a start. From out of the darkness, a dozen small faces were crowding close around the wide window and peering in.

"Aint it perfectly awful to think

of, though? I s'pose prob'ly he'll go to the chair for this!" she hazarded.

"No, he wont; they'll hang him," a small fat boy retorted. "I was down to the State's prison once, an' I seen where they'll do it, too."

"Oh, but wont it be terrible for his poor wife?"

"Well," the boy answered, "she got her picture in the papers."

"Where is she now?"

"Up with her folks."

"Do you think she'll come down here tonight?"

"Naw. An' I wouldn't want her, if I was him—a woman bustin' into tears! I'd rather be hanged without any talk."

Another boy's voice spoke sharply: (Continued on page 114)



"Yes, we got him here," he said. "Dave Warren captured him, up on his farm."

Tides

By Julian Street

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

A VAST number of letters have come to Mr. Street congratulating him upon the faithfulness of his re-creation of old scenes in the progress of Chicago. Many, too, have asked if this or that character was "taken from life." Of course none was. A character to a literary artist is never the portrait of one person, but a composite of memories, speculations, contacts and impressions. A real novelist is less concerned with particular facts than with essential truth.

The Story So Far:

TO the quiet old-time Chicago suburb of Oakland unrest and change had come—and the shadow of scandal.

For one fateful day Luke Holden (regarded by his neighbors as a political infidel because he was a Democrat) brought the real-estate man Shire out to Oakland, and Shire saw his chance; moreover Holden met Shire's handsome daughter Florence that day; and though he had a wife and little girl of his own, a flame was kindled. Shire and Holden called on Zenas Wheelock, a pioneer and perhaps the most prominent citizen of Oakland; and after they had gone, the fine old patriarch shook his head. "I'm afraid," he said to his spinster daughter Martha (her fiancé, along with Zenas' son Lyman, had been killed in the Custer Massacre), "I'm afraid we're in for a bad spell."

The bad spell began to develop. Shire bought land and built—not the "mansion" he promised, but a block of garish close-packed houses. Luke Holden was seen more and more in the company of Florence Shire, and tongues wagged. And even to Zenas' grandson Alan, son of the bookworm widower Harris Wheelock, trouble came: An attractive boy from New York, Ray Norcross, had plainly made an impression on Blanche Holden. After Ray had gone, Blanche was caught in school writing a letter to him, and punished for it. To show his sympathy Alan sold his treasured cigarette-pictures and with the proceeds bought for Blanche a little silver "friendship ring."

A climax came at the housewarming which Shire gave with much ostentation and champagne. Holden conspicuously neglected his wife Nannie for the company of Florence Shire at that gaudy party. And even when Nannie was taken seriously ill, he allowed her to go home without him. And—next morning Mrs. Holden died. . . .

A scant year later Florence Shire and Holden were married. Blanche stayed with her beloved friends the Wheelocks for a time; but when her half-brother was born, she proved all too useful as a nursemaid, for the second Mrs. Holden was eager to resume the gayeties of life. . . . It was not long afterward that Holden found himself in financial difficulties, and went to Shire for help. The real-estate man advised him to develop or sell a piece of land between Holden's house and the Wheelocks', sold to Holden cheaply by Zenas Wheelock in order that Nannie might have a garden, with the verbal agreement that it was not to be built upon.

Shortly thereafter Blanche was told that her father and step-mother were going for a trip to Florida, taking the baby with them, and that she was to stay with the Shires. Without avail she protested at the latter part of this arrangement; and only when she saw workmen tearing up her mother's garden and excavating for a new building did she understand it: her father had betrayed her mother's memory and his unwritten agreement with Zenas Wheelock.

Blanche had become more and more unhappy that winter with the Shires—and Ray Norcross' impetuous wooing of her was made thus the easier by her longing for escape. Only when Martha Wheelock showed Blanche's letter to Alan, did he learn that his boyhood sweetheart had married Ray and gone to New York to live.

Thereafter Alan spent many of his evenings with Leta Purnell; and there was an episodic dalliance with one Sophie Schoen, a pretty girl who sat beside Alan at the business college for which he had forsaken the university. After his graduation from business college he was given a place in the office of the Wheelocks' neighbor Colonel Burchard, and did well there.

It was about this time that Alan's father Harris came to Zenas about the Napier Place property—Zenas' original Chicago home, which had become surrounded by the Red Light district, but which the old man refused to sell because of the uses to which it would be put; he rented it, instead, at a low price, to the one remaining respectable person in the neighborhood.

"Mrs. Boddy came into the office this morning," said Harris. "She says she's going to leave when her lease is up, and I'm blessed if I know where we'll get anyone to replace her. Conditions down there seem to be worse than ever, and the police wont do anything about it." (*The story continues in detail:*)

BY means of devices so devious that only a good woman could have thought of them, Martha Wheelock succeeded in getting her father to Florida for the winter following the World's Fair.

At eighty-three he was still vigorous, but the year had been a trying one. Cleveland's election in the preceding November had greatly disappointed him, and the subsequent financial crisis, culminating with the midsummer of 1893, afforded final proof of that congenital incapacity which, in his opinion, marked all Democrats; moreover his old friend Charles Cleaver, first settler of Oakland, had lately died. Meanwhile the World's Fair kept the city in a constant tumult, and Zenas Wheelock, most active of Chicago's few remaining pioneers, became more than ever a public character. Edward Everett Hale, Charles Dudley Warner, Henry M. Stanley and other distinguished strangers came to the house, and he was taken to call upon Julia Ward Howe, who discussed with him the rights of women; and upon the Infanta Eulalia of Spain, who amazed him by smoking cigarettes.

"The last woman I saw smoking," he remarked when he came home, "was an old squaw on the Sangamon River, but she smoked a pipe."

Most of his visitors interested him, but when one afternoon a committee of ladies called, requesting that he take part in a tableau, wearing robes and a wreath in impersonation of "The Spirit of the Past," his refusal was so abrupt that his daughter remonstrated with him after they had gone.

"Why did you walk out of the room like that, Father?" she asked.



Alan was aware of her husband's dark eyes fixed upon them. "Parting is such sweet sorrow," Ray said dryly.

"Because," he replied, "I decline to be treated as if I were a sacred white cow."

Through the six months of the Fair the house was continually filled with visitors. Nephews and nieces of Zenas Wheelock, gray-haired men and women, offspring of his brother Ophir, long since dead, appeared in relays; and cousin Emma, the only one of them who had married, brought her husband, a New Hampshire mill-owner, and three grown children.

Meeting his New England relatives for the first time, Alan was struck by their resemblance to one another, and by the total dissimilarity between them and the members of his immediate family—except perhaps his father. Like his father, they were bookish and reserved, but there the parallel ended, for they had neither his vagueness nor his lethargy. Harris paid little attention to the Fair, but the New England relatives made a religion of it, going every day and driving themselves on with a conscientious determination to see everything.

Their mode of thought, even their mode of speech, was different. Liking them, he felt remote from them, and one evening in

October, when the last of them had gone, he spoke to his aunt of this feeling.

"Father used to feel that way about Uncle Ophir," she told him. "He had an idea of coming West and leaving the property around Portsmouth for Uncle Thomas and their sister. Uncle Thomas was lame, and Uncle Ophir was a big, strong man, but had no enterprise. When the time came, he wouldn't leave home, and afterward when Father wrote him to come to Chicago, he still refused. In his letters he was always asking about Indians and wolves and heating-arrangements. Then he married Aunt Abbie, and she wouldn't hear of moving; so they remained in the old house, leading dull lives, but feeling safe, until one night something went wrong with the furnace and the coal-gas asphyxiated them. So their children took up the property, and there they are still."

"In the old days the strong men went to sea; but with the opening of the Middle West, they began to come out here as Father did. The Free Soil controversy, and the gold-rush, took them farther and farther west. I've seen them streaming through

An expression of horror crossed the Colonel's face. "Look at that!" he exclaimed.

Chicago in their Conestoga wagons with their dogs trotting beside them, heading out Ashland Avenue past the old Bull Head Tavern and over the plank road toward the prairie. Some were seeking opportunity; some were seeking adventure; some were trying to keep slavery out of Kansas; and always it was the strong who went and the weak who stayed behind. If Father hadn't been a high-spirited man, we'd be living back in New England now."

They had been talking in Martha Wheelock's room, and now, at the sound of the supper bell, they rose and moved to the hall, where they met Zenas Wheelock coming from his doorway. Following his grandfather down the stairs, Alan noticed that he moved more slowly than usual, and when he spoke, his voice was hoarse. A sudden drop in temperature that afternoon had caught him at the Fair without an overcoat.

Next day his cold was worse, and when Martha consulted the doctor, whom her father refused to see, he advised her to get him South for the winter.

"I'll see what I can do," she said, but she made no mention of the project to her father.

About this time it might have been observed that she developed an extraordinary preoccupation with her own health, saying that the Fair had exhausted her, that she hoped she might never see a visitor again, that the thought of approaching winter chilled her to the marrow.

Zenas Wheelock became concerned about her, but when presently he suggested that she go South, she declined to entertain the idea, telling him she would be too lonely down there by herself. Nevertheless he shrewdly divined that she longed to go, for frequently he found upon the library table pamphlets she had been reading—pamphlets containing tropical pictures that turned his thoughts back seventy-four years to a cruise in the old brig *Hyperion* commanded by his Uncle Ichabod.

How well he remembered the morning his uncle pulled him out of his bunk as they neared Havana harbor. The picture of the old Spanish fort at St. Augustine resembled Morro Castle. It must be pleasant in St. Augustine just now. He would like to see that fort—and the famous new Ponce de Leon Hotel people talked so much about.

Seventy-four years since he had seen a palm-lined beach, orange-trees, a grove of shaddock. No one in the North had seen shaddock in those days, but lately he had found them for sale in a market on South Water Street. "A new delicacy," said the man. "Grapefruit." They ought not to change the names of things. His grandfather knew Captain Shaddock.

Martha wasn't looking well. It wasn't like her to complain. Housekeeping was more wearing than most people realized, and she hadn't had a rest in years. He'd give her a surprise. He'd take her to Florida himself!



When he informed her of his intention, she seemed hardly able to believe her ears; and later, in St. Augustine, as they strolled along the sea-wall in the golden sunlight, he would take credit to himself, reminding her that but for this great idea of his, they would be freezing in Chicago.

During Martha Wheelock's absence Delia clearly felt her responsibility as housekeeper, and with two men to cater for made extra efforts, going daily to market with her basket, carefully selecting for Alan thick steaks, and for his father sweetbreads or quail. Often she made muffins or hot rolls, and the delicious conserves and plum puddings usually reserved for company.

Nevertheless the house was lonely. Harris as usual spent his evenings with his books, retiring after midnight and rising after Alan had left for work. At supper, their one meal together, he would read, and if Alan spoke to him, would answer vaguely. Living alone with his father, Alan felt remoter from him than before, and he often puzzled over the gray figure across the table, marveling that a human being could be so detached from the world in which he lived.

At first Alan made it a point to keep his father company at supper, but as the other seemed hardly to notice whether he was there or not, he began to accept invitations to dine out, sometimes at the Burchards', but most often at Leta Purnell's.



The aversion to dancing which had persisted in him through the successive seasons of Miss Lightner's class was gone, for Leta had taken him in hand, patiently drilling him in her parlor to the accompaniment of tunes which they would hum together, accenting the beat as they glided over the red carpet—"After the Ball" and "Two Little Girls in Blue" for waltz-time, and "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" for the new dance, the two-step, which was superseding the polka.

Dancing with other girls, Alan thought of himself as merely adequate; he could keep time and could reverse with less effort than would be required to stop the revolution of the world and make it turn the other way; but when he danced with Leta, he felt graceful and expert, and though he knew that the grace and the expertness were in reality not his but hers, her praise flattered him.

It was flattering also that by tacit understanding he was Leta's

invariable escort, and that he had first choice of her dances. He was proud of her at parties; proud of her looks, of the style with which she wore her pretty dresses, and of her popularity. There was never any trouble about getting Leta's program filled; the moment she appeared, a crowd of boys would gather round her, and "courtesy extras" were taken in numbers that could not possibly be reached.

During the Christmas holidays a scattering of lordly youths from Eastern colleges came home as usual, their collars a little taller, the toes of their shoes a little more pointed, their manners a little more elaborate than those of boys who attended nearer universities, or who, like Alan, were at work. Certainly Harvard, Yale and Princeton put a sartorial and tonsorial stamp upon their sons. Among the girls there was now much talking of college "frats" and clubs, and some of them wore pins of gold and enamel, bearing mysterious devices.



The sensation of the holidays was Hector Cozzens, Grant Hayes' roommate at Harvard, who lived on the North Side but came with Grant to many of the Oakland parties. He was tall and handsome with a shock of blond hair, long in the prevailing football manner, with a central parting from which it fell in splendid arches at each side. His Ascot and De Joinville ties were sumptuous, his scarfpins various and handsome, and his shirts, according to Grant, were made to order with the cuffs sewed to the sleeves—which must have been true, since, instead of being round and fastening with regular cuff-buttons, the two edges met in a parallel line, being held in place by a contrivance of gold buttons and links.

From the first it was apparent that Hector admired Leta, and with the outlander's indifference to established relationships, he quite disregarded Alan and at parties showed her marked attention.

One Sunday afternoon when Alan was at the Purnells', Hector arrived, magnificent in Prince Albert and silk hat. Leta seemed slightly embarrassed by the call, but Mrs. Purnell, obviously impressed by the resplendent young man, made a special effort to entertain him, talking about Des Moines and people she had

known there, telling of Leta's talent for recitation and fancy dancing, deploring her abandonment of these two arts, and enumerating qualities which, she said, accounted for her being such a favorite.

"I'll say *one* thing for my daughter," she told Hector as if everything else she had said were uncomplimentary, "—there's not a mean bone in her body. She never says an unkind thing about anybody, and I don't believe she ever thinks an unkind thought, either."

"I'm sure," Hector gravely agreed.

"And what's more," pursued the adoring mother, "she wouldn't raise a finger to make herself popular. Popularity just comes to her naturally, and she isn't a bit spoiled by it."

"Oh, *Mother!*" protested Leta, blushing.

"Oh, I know you don't like to hear me sing your praises," answered Mrs. Purnell, beaming at her, "but it's all perfectly true, and if a thing is true, I don't see any reason why a person shouldn't speak out—do you, Mr. Cozzens?"

"Why no, certainly not," said Hector.

As he was leaving, Mr. Purnell came downstairs wearing his red felt "Romeos" and carrying the Sunday paper.



"Look here, Josie," the Captain interjected. "There's no use trying to come anything like that on us."

"Cozzens," he murmured thoughtfully. "Must be some of those rich Cozzens pump folks."

"Really, Papa, I wish you—" But Leta was interrupted by her mother.

"One thing's sure," she declared, "and that is that it was mighty gal-lant of him to come away over here from the North Side to ask you for some dances, and you must certainly save him some."

"His father must be the one that drives the tally-ho," Mr. Purnell remarked; and Alan, who during Hector's call had felt that the situation was awkward, and who found the ensuing colloquy still more awkward, was glad of a chance to put in a word.

"Yes, he's the one," he informed Leta's father. "He takes ribbons at the horse-show every year, and—" About to impart something further, he checked himself. Perhaps Colonel Burchard wouldn't want him to tell; and besides, if he did tell, it might appear that he was jealous. Therefore he said nothing of the fact that the Colonel, a stockholder, was disturbed about the condition of the Cozzens Pump Company.

Apparently, however, the Company's difficulties were not of sufficient magnitude to affect Hector's allowance, for on the day of his return to college, he sent Leta a bunch of violets as large as a pie.

That evening the violets were exhibited to Alan. He was sitting in the Purnells' parlor

talking with Leta, when her mother came bustling into the room.

"Smell!" she cried, pressing the huge bouquet into his face. "Aren't they perfectly lovely? Wasn't it just too sweet of him?" A stranger might have supposed the violets had been sent to her rather than to Leta. "They came from Varden's, too!" she added, exhibiting the cover of the purple box.

Again Leta blushed. "Alan's seen violets before, Mother," she said reprovingly; and Mrs. Purnell had hardly left the room when Leta, turning troubled eyes to Alan, said:

"I was going to tell you myself, if Mother'd given me time."

Chapter Twenty-four

THE difficulties of the Cozzens Pump Company were of greater concern to Colonel Burchard than Alan had at first realized. Hector's grandfather, founder of the business, had been one of the Colonel's close friends, and his stock interest, dating from the early days, was large. Late in January he called a meeting of stockholders at his office, and when a stockholders' protective committee was formed, the Colonel was unanimously elected chairman.

As secretary of this and subsequent meetings, Alan began to

"Let's see—where's your overcoat?" he said, fumbling among the garments on the hall rack; and upon Hector's replying that he wasn't wearing an overcoat, he exclaimed: "Lawky, I should think you'd freeze!"

"Goodness, Papa," said Leta when the door had closed behind the departing visitor, "haven't you noticed that hardly any of the Eastern college men wear overcoats with their Prince Alberts now? It's not the style."

"Style?" said her father. "What's that got to do with keeping warm?" He turned to Alan, asking: "You wear an overcoat, don't you?"

"Why, yes," said Alan, "but I haven't a Prince Albert."

Mrs. Purnell was at the parlor window watching through the lace curtains as Hector moved up the street.

"What a perfectly stunning fellow!" she cried. "Look how he carries his cane—upside down with the crook almost touching the walk. That must be the latest." And as Hector disappeared from view, she turned to them, and continued: "Did you notice the way he shook hands? I do like to see men bow from the waist, like that. It looks so,"—she hesitated for an instant ere she essayed the verbal leap,—"*so fin de siècle*."

Mr. Purnell took Hector's calling-card from the table and appeared to study it.

acquire a broad picture of business, and of the methods of successful men in dealing with large problems; and from hearing the plight of the company discussed by the Colonel and his associates, he gained considerable knowledge of its affairs, and of the causes of its present troubles.

The causes were not complex. Hector's father, it was agreed, lacked both the judgment and the industry of his progenitor. As president and general manager he had left the running of the company to others, regarding it merely as a source of revenue for himself and several of his intimates whom he had put in as officers. Salaries had been arbitrarily raised and dividends arbitrarily increased; meanwhile the surplus had shrunk and investigation now disclosed a probability that plants and inventories were carried on the books at figures much too high.

The case was calmly discussed from various viewpoints, and it seemed to Alan that the quality outstanding in the ablest members of the committee was mere common sense. And it was perhaps because of this preponderance of common sense on the committee that Mr. Cozzens, when he appeared, made an impression so unfavorable. He was a handsome man, rather too conspicuously dressed for the occasion, Alan thought; and his doubts concerning the genuineness of the confidence at first displayed by Mr. Cozzens were confirmed when under the direct questioning of the bearded elders, he was forced repeatedly to answer that he didn't know, that he would have to look it up; and when at last, detected in a slight equivocation, he flushed and stammered as he tried vainly to make a show of dignity, Alan was sorry for him because he was so plainly shown up as a fool.

The object of the committee was to avoid a receivership if possible, and to this end the members gave the company temporary aid from their own pockets while Colonel Burchard made a hasty effort to ascertain the actual state of its affairs. Working with his employer on this investigation, Alan learned more of business methods.

His days were now spent mostly at the Company's plant, and his evenings at the Burchard house, where a typewriter had been installed for him.

It was after two o'clock one morning when, having typed the last pages of the Colonel's report, Alan placed it before him on the library desk.

"You've looked it over?"

"Yes sir."

Without reading, the Colonel dipped his pen and signed; nor could any spoken praise have made Alan more proud.

"You've been a great help, Alan." The Colonel rose and laid his hand upon his shoulder. "I shall go to New York tomorrow to lay this matter before the bankers, and I'd like you to go with me if you can. Get some sleep and come over when you wake."

New York! Sleep! Thoughts altogether incompatible. Tired though he was, Alan lay awake, his mind filled with swift-moving visions of the journey, the arrival, the famous sights he was about to see. Reading a letter from Blanche, forwarded to him a few days ago by his Aunt Martha, he had wondered if he would ever see New York. And now, unexpectedly, he was going there. How surprised Blanche would be when he rang her bell! They hadn't seen each other since before she married. Two years!

THE Colonel had told Alan to come over as soon as he woke up; and next morning, flinging back the covers, he leaped out of bed, and in less than an hour was running up the steps to the high veranda of the big buff mansion across the way.

His employer had breakfasted early as usual and by telephone had made arrangements for their departure that afternoon; Alan had only to pack, go to the ticket office, and meet him at the train.

The family's best hand-baggage had gone to Florida with his grandfather and his aunt, but with Delia's aid he found in the attic a little tan satchel and an old gray canvas "telescope" that fastened with a shawl-strap and had the merit of capaciousness. It was thrilling to pack and say good-by to Delia and Jason; and when, burdened with his impedimenta, he stopped at the Purnells' he felt like a hero of romance: one of those adventurous and debonair figures ready at a moment's notice to go dashing about the world.

The Purnells were astonished.

"How long will you be gone?" Leta asked.

"That's uncertain."

"Do you know where you'll stop?"

He tried to speak nonchalantly as he mentioned the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

"Gracious," exclaimed Mrs. Purnell, "I guess you'll hardly know your old friends after you get back!"

When he rose to go, she remained in the parlor, taking up a newspaper, while Leta followed him to the hall.

"Write often," she whispered as they stood in the shadowy corner by the front door; and in a normal voice she added: "Don't forget to tell me about the latest New York styles when you write."

"I don't know how good I'll be at that," he replied, smiling, "but I'll try."

She reached up, fingering a button on his overcoat. From the parlor came the rattle of the newspaper as Mrs. Purnell turned a page.

"They say sleeves are going to be perfectly enormous," Leta said; whereat through the open doorway came her mother's voice supplementing:

"I hear they'll be of different material from the dress, too."

"I'll watch out for that, Mrs. Purnell."

Leta looked up at him with melting eyes.

"I'm going to miss you!" she whispered, and pressed her face to his.

FROM Randolph Street station Alan hurried across town to reach his father before the latter should go out to lunch. Harris Wheelock's office, at the rear of the building, faced a smoke-grimed court, and the light penetrating the tall, streaked windows was so diluted that even at midday the room looked dark and gloomy. Because of the shortage of light Harris usually sat with his back to a window, and from the door nothing of him was visible save the crown of his head projecting above the superstructure of the roll-top desk. Opening the door, Alan heard voices; and entering, he saw in the chair beside the desk the bulky figure of Mr. Shire.

The conversation abruptly stopped, and as Alan put down his baggage, he was conscious of Shire's steady gaze, and of his father's head rising up behind the desk like that of a turtle.

"Oh, it's you, Alan. Anything you want? Mr. Shire and I are—ah—we are busy at present." As he spoke, he was shifting papers on the desk.

Briefly Alan explained why he had come and mentioned his New York address. "I came to say good-by," he finished.

"Yes, I see." His father's manner was abstracted. "Well—good luck to you!" Though doubtless intended as a farewell salute, his gesture of the hand conveyed dismissal, and Alan with a word of adieu took up his bags and departed.

The discovery of Shire in the office left him disturbed. What could have brought him there? Evidently business. But what sort of business? What business could his father have with Shire? On his way to the ticket-office, he turned the subject over in his mind but could find no satisfactory explanation.

In the excitement of departure the problem was driven for a time from Alan's thoughts, but it came back to him that night, when after talking for a time with Colonel Burchard, he retired.

He had been shocked by his father's tolerant attitude toward the building of the flats next door, and he knew that this tolerance had astonished his grandfather. But that wasn't the worst of it; for after Zenas Wheelock went to Florida, it became evident that Harris was still on good terms with Shire and Luke Holden. He had even gone to supper at Luke's house, and the Shires had been present. Alan, still burning with the injustice done by them to his grandfather, had regretted this. It seemed to him almost disloyal. However, he thought he could account for it. It was due, he believed, to Harris Wheelock's proverbial hatred of unpleasantnesses. . . .

The nocturnal landscape, sweeping past, became in his imagination a swiftly flowing river, and the steady roar of the train was translated into an orchestral harmony, background for a lively tune sung by the creaking of the car to the rapid, metrical drumming of the wheels. He closed his eyes and let his head fall back upon the pillows, listening. Now he almost knew the tune by heart. A gay tune. He must remember it. He would hum it to Blanche and see if she could learn to play it.

But two nights later, when he saw Blanche, the tune was forgotten.

Chapter Twenty-five

ALAN'S meeting with Blanche was not as he had imagined it. They met in a hotel parlor, chill and formal in spite of the sanguinary coloring of carpet and up- (Continued on page 137)

Slewfoot Sam felt his importance but derived no comfort from it.

DOWN in Alabama where the author of this story lives, his business with an important steel company enables him to know, at first hand and well, the peculiar characteristics of the colored people with whom he is surrounded. The stories he writes are transcripts from life in its essentials, and are so accepted by those who know his characters as well as he does himself.



Hound Bait

By
Arthur K.
Akers

Illustrated by H. Weston Taylor

"NAW, suh, Cap'n Clem, I aint gwine be free lunch for no dawg!" protested the dusky individual known as "Slewfoot" Sam to his jailer, High Sheriff Hilton of Genesee County, Alabama. "Aint gwine let no dawgs chase me. Dem dawgs may be jes' as fat an' triffin' as you says, but dey still is dawgs. And dat bloodhoun' kind of dawg, dey jes' natu'ally *pre-fers* dark meat on de hoof."

"But look here, Sam," urged the Sheriff. "See the dawgs' side of it. Jes' like I told you before you got so mulish about it, the county's hounds need exercise and trainin', bad. Aint been no crime around here in a month, and them dawgs have got to have somethin' to chase, or they'll go stale on us. Here you are, eatin' the county's victuals and restin', and when I ask a little favor of you, you kick like a durned steer. How much longer you got to stay in here for tryin' to vote the Republican ticket last month, anyway?"

"I aint rightly know, suh. Cun'l Worley, he say hit ought to be fo' life, but maybe he lemme out come cotton-plantin' time."

"Well, whatever your term is, I promise you this: it'll cut it down right smart if you'll get out tonight and stay in front of them dawgs as far as Three-Mile Swamp, over beyond Steamboat's house, there. All you got to do is travel fast, and climb a tree if the dawgs get too close."

"Yes suh. Dat sound fine. But whut if'n I aint so swift in de feet as you make out, like? Dey cain't even say, 'Aint he look natu'al?'—de dawgs done ruint me 'fo' de fun'ral. Naw suh; me, I ruther stay and *wuk* out de time dan *run* hit out. Hit's easier on de feet."

"All right, then, Sam. All right. I'll jes' get somebody else to do it for me. But you don't need to look for no more favors from me. Jes' for that, I've a blamed good notion to arrest that big bad boy, Steamboat, and lock him up in here

with you to teach you manners. Tell me him and you aint none too good friends no way."

Sam turned from darkest African to lavender. He hustled for the soft pedal and bore down on it manfully in the crisis. "Aw, Cap'n Clem," he captivated, "I jes' *pro-jectin'* about dat dawg bus'ness. I sho gwine look after yo' int'rests fo' you. Is I got to choose 'twixt dawgs and ol' Steamboat, gimme de dawgs. Please suh, don't put dat Steamboat in heah wid me, boss!"

Perceiving the turn matters were taking, Sheriff Clem wisely let the subject rest right there, so far as Sam was concerned, promising nothing, threatening nothing further. But—Archimedes, hurtling home to tell the wife that he had bumped into something new concerning the lever, felt no more elation than did High Sheriff Clem Hilton in having discovered in Steamboat a similar instrument that would hereafter move the stubborn Slewfoot in whatever way the Sheriff would have him to go. Yet shortly the official was pursuing the question further with George, the coal-black jail janitor and cook. George's sentence had expired some years previous, but the Sheriff's cast-off suits fitted George, and George's culinary technique suited the Sheriff, and so his term had been extended indefinitely and unanimously.

"George," inquired the officer with studied carelessness, "what's all this between Sam and Steamboat?"

"Aint know, suh."

"George!" The Sheriff fixed him with a cold official eye. "Quit lyin'."

"Well suh, hit aint nothin' but nigger doin's. White folks aint in'sted in dem."

"I am."

"Well suh, you sec—hit's fam'ly trouble: Sam done kin to ol' Steamboat—by ma'iage. Steamboat is Sam's wife's other

husband. Steamboat heah 'bout Sam, and he sent him word dat one husband at a time is nuf fo' any woman. He say, do he catch Sam round de town, hit gwine take sevum doctors to find out is hit Sam or jes' pile of scraps lyin' in de road. Sam, he aint say nothin' twel he git in jail; den he begun sendin' out word how he gwine go home when he git out and feed Steamboat back all dat big talk wid a ball-bearin' razor. Hit scan'lous how de word done been sent back and fo'th 'twixt dem two. Each one so skeered of t'other now dat dey aint no tellin' *whut* gwine happen do dey git together."

"Well, they're *liable* to get together if I hear any more slack talk out of Slewfoot about what he will do and what he wont do around my jail."

George fell to sweeping with vigor, raising so mighty a dust that his employer fled coughing from the scene. "Who-o-ee!" chuckled George. "Cap'n Clem better keep dem two a-part, lessen does he want de whole side he jail-house done tore down wid dem tryin' to git away from each other!"

In the jail office the Sheriff recovered his breath and found his deputy, Jim Meadows, laboring over the county's records of crime. Jim looked up sadly as his superior entered. "Still aint nothin' for them dawgs to do," he complained. "Outside of vi'latin' the all-day parkin'-laws around the courthouse square, this town's as moral as a cemetery. Reck'n we'll have to put in one of these here gymnasiums for them dawgs yet, so's they can git some reg'lar exercise and trainin'."

But his superior did not share his gloom. "Jim," he remarked easily, "sometimes I can see why I'm sheriff and you're jes' a dep'ty; it's the difference in brains. While you set here and stew about a thing, I go out and fix it. Them dawgs is goin' to git exercise, tonight, in the natu'al way, like was intended."

Jim grunted skeptically. "What they goin' to chase?"

"Slewfoot."

"Humph! Better be careful with him," admonished the deputy. "Mebbe your brain aint so powerful as you claim. You know he's Worley's pet coon. Me, I fool some with buzzsaws and rattlesnakes, but I don't never aim to monkey with no county chairman's pets."

"Aw, the trouble with you, Jim, is you're afraid of your own shadow. Aint nobody goin' to hurt Slewfoot."

"But s'pose he outruns the dawgs and gits loose? Then what you goin' to say when Worley wants him?"

"You go off and worry about somethin' else, Jim. Leave this to me; it's over your head. Why, that Slewfoot can't make no time. Fat as they is, them dawgs will have him roostin' in a high tree before he's gone a mile. When it's time to lock up, we'll jes' go drag 'em off'n him and let him come on back to jail. Aint no use havin' them dawgs tied up here, eatin' and losin' their keen edge, when we can have a good chase for them, and not run no risk of Slewfoot's gettin' loose, either."

"All right, Clem, I'm agreeable," returned his



"Before I kill you," he demanded coldly, "tell me where's my dawgs."

deputy. "It's you what's the corpse if anything goes wrong. Aint no objection to a few bets, I reckon?"

"N-n-no," conceded the Sheriff, "not if the thing is handled judicious. We don't want word gettin' to the wrong places about it. And you might lemme know if you find anybody with a weak mind and some ready cash. I got a few dollars that says the dawgs wins."

Without further words the long, gangling deputy slouched out. Thereafter he was seen in places where differences of opinion might be found in the matter of relative speeds and endurance. In his absence the Sheriff made his few simple preparations, consisting of the instructions to George: "Feed them dawgs tonight, and I'll break your back."

Then he repaired to the cell of Sam. "Which you like, Sam," he inquired of that gentleman crisply, "about three miles in the fresh air tonight—or Steamboat?"

"Cap'n," responded that martyr to exercise and preparedness, "I aims

spots and essayed naps. The Sheriff eyed them with disgust. "What did I tell you, Jim?" he mourned. "Look at 'em! Gone to sleep a'ready. Didn't I tell you they had done lost their fine edge?"

"It's all right, if this is the way to sharpen 'em up," replied the other with a dubious air. "Me, I aint so sure."

"Leave it to me," the Sheriff reassured him. "Jes' leave that to me."

Ten minutes later, it being estimated that Sam had passed the half-mile post, George woke up the dogs. But the ensuing quarter-hour tended mainly to prove that as master of hounds George was a good janitor. For twice the dogs crawled under the jail and must be dragged forth. Once they went off in quite the wrong direction. Frequently the yelling, sweating George must pause to untangle the official sash-cord. Shortly it seemed that the entire town must surely be aroused by his stentorian efforts to get the man-hunt under way. Sheriff Hilton grew clammy with embarrassment



Sam left by the window, taking the sash with him. Steamboat used the door.

to look attter yo' int'rests, and I sho craves de air—in sech cases."

"Fine! Jes' so you keep ahead of the dawgs, and get back here by mornin', everything'll be all right."

"Yes suh."

By eight o'clock that evening the more sporting citizenry of Genesee had gathered surreptitiously in the shadow of the courthouse. As master of hounds, George, the jail janitor, was in a ragged swallow-tailed coat and his glory. He had a sash-cord about the necks of two sleepy-looking little black-and-brown hounds with long, drooping ears. Further, some canine grapevine telegraph or radio had undoubtedly broadcast the news that it would be a memorable night in Genesee for all that could attend. Certainly every able-bodied dog in town had turned out, ready for whatever the evening might hold.

Slewfoot Sam felt his importance but derived no particular comfort from it. At eight-fifteen Deputy Jim brought him forth. A cool night wind blew, and Sam shivered under it. The hounds were led up for a good hearty sniff of the prisoner, that they might be trusted to trail the right person. The cold noses of their reality put a heavy strain upon Slewfoot's ability to stand hitched. Slewfoot shivered some more. At length the Sheriff raised his hand dramatically. When he dropped it, Sam melted away into the surrounding darkness.

Unimpressed, the hounds turned around three times in favored

lest the county chairman arrive for personal investigation of the uproar. But all things must end, and at last the dogs took the scent and were off.

Forthwith the Sheriff and his deputy cranked the county car, leaped aboard, and amid a whirring of gears, they too took up the pursuit. Citizens followed closely, the heavier betters leading by a radiator, so to speak. As at a signal, the town dogs joined in deliriously. Being of various ancestries and each giving tongue in the manner of his fathers, the vocal outburst that followed was a medley of yapping, belling, and plain and fancy barking that would have shamed a dog-show for volume and variety.

Up the hill from the town swept the chase. A mile off through the dark, Slewfoot heard it coming. Pardonably mistaking noise for speed, he shifted himself into high and began to take a real interest in his progress. Between jumps he communed with himself brokenly. "Oh, Lawd! I must not—of been runnin'—a-tall!" he panted ruefully. "Heah dey come! Do dem dawgs—cotch me—I jes' same as—hash! Feet, I done—raised you right. Don't go back—on me now! Whuff!"

The chase quickened marvelously as the scent freshened. In self-defense Sam accelerated some more. Over rough and paralleling roads, the two officers clung to their seats while the wind sang in their ears and the ruts and (Continued on page 130)

The Love Altar

By

Illustrated by
Everett Shinn

Rita Weiman

Is romance always what it is expected to be? Is it always to be found for the seeking? Here is the memorable story of a woman who believed it awaited her in a certain place. And it did, but it was not at all the romance to which she looked forward. Miss Weiman says she found the story lying ready to her hand in lovely Sorrento.

VELVET landscape beyond the train windows, sinking under the hazy hood of southern Italy's twilight robe. Echoes of vagabond song in the lilting air. Promise of Naples, lover of the world. All meant nothing. Or rather, all meant one thing. And that one thing translated itself into the letter held open before her.

She was no longer a girl. Yet her eyes gave forth the flame of youth's exultation: the intense glow of censers swaying toward an altar. She might have been thirty-three—or younger, or older. It did not much matter. Neither did the fact that her features were by no means perfect. Perhaps because of its expression, perhaps for the glistening white skin with its odd vibrating underwarmth, perhaps for the fact that her draped turban pulled down close over forehead and ears made one speculate as to the color of her hair, the face was completely arresting.

At least, so the young Frenchman who had slipped unnoticed into the compartment seemed to find it. He sat in the far corner opposite and next to the door, watching the afternoon light point its finger first at the tip of a nose that was too short, then glidingly at the mobile mouth that was too large, then glancing across the teeth that pressed emotionally into the full lower lip. With the Latin's frank interest in a woman who did not even realize his existence, his gaze was absolutely magnetized. Yet hers did not stir from the letter in her hand.

Toward Naples rocked the train, none too swiftly, after the manner of Italian travel, with occasional between-station stops to consider the problems of locomotion.

"Madame will pardon me—"

She glanced up, bewildered, as if coming out of mental fog. Her first gesture was rapidly to fold the letter and thrust it into its envelope. Yet, without suspicion, she looked into the eager face above hers. He was on his feet, bending toward her with gentle courtesy.

"A thousand pardons," came from him in punctilious English, "but we are drawing into the station. We stop only fifteen minutes, and I thought—will Madame not permit me to purchase refreshments? A small basket for her? We shall be late arriving, and there is no way to procure dinner on this train."

"I suppose I am hungry," she reflected, quite naturally accepting him with impersonal indifference. "Would you mind?" She reached hastily for her handbag, groping on the seat. Before she found it, he had made his exit.

She leaned back, eyes languidly closing. The Frenchman slipped from her mind the instant he slipped out of sight. He might have been the conductor, or as completely unimportant as a porter, had such an incumbent existed in Italy. She was too far away even to recall that for the length of the trip from Rome, this first-class compartment, with its dirty red plush and still dirtier accessories, was hers alone, by right of loosened purse-strings.

Not until he returned, a fat little basket hugged under each arm, did she realize that he had addressed her in English before she so much as opened her lips. Over that, she puzzled a bit.

Her luggage bore only initials, and she had always been told that in dress she had more the air of a Continental than an American.

Yet as he sat down opposite, with all the assumption of old acquaintance, he launched into her native tongue with but the faintest accent of his own.

Watching him open the baskets and lean forward to offer her the choice, though they were identical, she was conscious only of a winning smile that, for her, possessed neither sex nor personality. Again she reached for her handbag.

"How much am I in your debt?" were the first words.

"Oh," he protested, "it is I who am in yours, madame. You allow me to be of service. Please—" Genuine hurt was in the low voice.

She shrugged. The matter was not worth arguing. If it appealed to the boy's gallantry to buy a perfectly strange female her supper, let him amuse himself.

"Besides, Madame has permitted me to share her compartment," he added with twinkling unctious.

"When did you ask permission?" She lifted thin, expressive brows.

"Madame's failure to dismiss me granted it."

Again her eyebrows almost touched the turban edge.

"You assume that I knew you were here," she frowned.

"I knew perfectly well that you did not. But that gracious lack of knowledge made me welcome."

She gave a half-smile. The boy's absence of formality was effectively covered by his diplomacy.

Her gaze drifted to the graceful countryside preparing for sleep beyond the train windows. Again she became completely oblivious of her companion.

"Madame wonders, perhaps, how I recognized her for an American?" he suggested, opening a small bottle of red wine whose nose protruded from the basket, and taking from his coat pocket a collapsible cup.

She turned, observed him casually. He wore tan tweeds, rather a departure from the habit of the Frenchman. They were loose, too—the cut of the British Isles.

"Yes. It did rather puzzle me."

"I have been watching Madame read her letter."

As if it were self-revealing, she quickly thrust the envelope under cover of her bag.

He gave a glance at the place of concealment.

"It was rude, but I could not remove my gaze from Madame. Her lips fascinated me," he added with unassuming frankness.

"Ah—you will accept my apologies, I hope."

She stared, focusing on him at last as a person.

"You don't mean to say you actually read my lips?"

"Madame's eyes, as well. They are so—alive," the amazing young man proceeded. "Madame goes to meet romance."

With the statement, he passed her a cup of wine. She set it down, uncertain how to meet this final assumption.

"I am going to be married," she replied with a simple directness approaching his own.



"It was rude, but I could not remove my gaze from Madame. Her lips fascinated me."

"Ah, what a pity!" Genuine regret was in his voice. "And I thought Madame was going to find romance."

"I am," she replied, more to the thought than to him. "And I'm not 'madame.'"

"Miss?" He pronounced the word with complete astonishment, as if its use were rare. "But surely this is not the first time you will marry?"

"Do I look as old as that?" she laughed, wondering why she troubled to answer him at all. It was just the champagne of happiness bubbling to the surface, she supposed.

"Ah, no—" he protested. "But—pardon, I do not wish to be impertinent—you are so—so, *intrigante*, as we say in French, it does not seem possible—"

"That I am an old maid?" she laughed again.

It was utterly crazy to talk like this to an absolute stranger. A man, at that! But then, one did crazy things in Italy. And there was something about him. *Simpatia!* That was it. A sense of understanding. Besides, it was good to talk to some one. She would see Roger so soon—she wanted to think aloud of him.

"Old maid—*mon Dieu!*" The Frenchman flung up his hands. "Never that! They are born so. You are born—pardon!—for other things."

"Yet that's what I am!" her eyes crinkled at the corners. "Have been, a good many years."

"If so, it is because you were waiting for something you dared not take."

The smile died from her eyes. His succinct, unequivocal statement resounded like a cannon-boom. Galvanizing! Through the haze of dreams in which she had been floating, she bowed before the keenness of his perception. She had been waiting—for what? Roger's freedom. Somehow, some way, she had known it would come before her youth was utterly gone. His letters throughout the fourteen years of his marriage had formed a cable across many seas holding bound her imagination. Their suggestions of his own unhappiness—tangible links in a chain intangible. Precious bondage that rendered every other man who came into those years an unreality against the omnipresence of the man she could not have.

The Frenchman was watching her. Clouds across her brilliant eyes. The deep veil of deep emotion.

"Waiting," he observed softly, "for divorce—or death."

The insolence of the statement was lost in his almost impersonal contemplation of it. Exactly as if he were holding up for her inspection a specimen analyzed in the laboratory of thought.

"What a stunning woman you are, Rhoda! Do you always wear clothes as thin as that?" he added.

"And why not?" he proceeded, still without directly addressing her. "A beautiful woman robbed of the one who should be hers."

Her impulse was to let him ramble on without interruption. After all, what did he matter? An impudent, encroaching stranger, curiously prying into her affairs. Yet a note of self-defense crept into the reply she could not hold back.

"Do you realize," came low, "that you are practically accusing a woman of being a mental murderess?"

"Oh," he protested, hands flung up in a vivid gesture that seemed habitual, "not consciously! She does not know, of course. But at the back of her mind, why should there not dwell the hope?" His voice faded suggestively.

"That would be brutal," she shuddered.

"All emotion is brutal—unreasoning. How many times has not each one of us killed in imagination, whereas actually we would not lift one finger to draw a man's blood!"

"You're speaking of anger."

"No—a thousand more complex motives. For example, a man has a wife who does not understand him. Another woman does—she knows his suffering. She adores him. How often"—and she fancied a sly note in his subtle voice—"does that woman mentally throttle that wife until no breath of life is left?"

She turned her eyes suddenly from his. He might have been placing before her a transcript of her own hours of solitude, when rebellion against the woman who held Roger's happiness so lightly had tortured her. The Frenchman was smiling softly into his cup of red wine. She felt him doing it. Again that wave of necessity for the defensive swept over her. Yet she said nothing. Why bother? After all, he was just an amusing companion—certainly a unique type. It would be one of the many things to discuss with Roger—the fact that she was so in love that a casual traveler could read it in her eyes. But then, she would probably have forgotten this young Frenchman by the time she was in Roger's arms.

"There are women," he observed into his cup, "to whom love is an embrace that must not too greatly disarrange the make-up. There are others to whom it is an altar before which they must prostrate themselves. Pardon—may I ask where this altar awaits you?" he added abruptly.

"Sorrento," she responded without hesitation. "That was where we met—when I was nineteen."

"And you have not met since?"

"Why, of course—a number of times. But not at all within the past eight years."

"He has been away?"

"In India and China." She was faintly amused at his persistence.

"Ah—he is not an American, then?"

"Oh, yes—but he's lived abroad for some time."

"Sorrento,"—he gazed out at the landscape, now little more than a floating mist upon the sea of night,—"a superb temple in which to kneel to Romance. May its choir sing for you—the song of angels."

She smiled. Song of angels—it was in her soul. She turned the smile upon the Frenchman.

"Thank you," she said softly. . . .

Late that night—the train had dragged wearily into the station several hours behind schedule—that song floated, a chime across the Bay of Naples.

A wire to Roger from Rome had asked him not to attempt to meet her train. She wanted to see him first at the spot where they had met years ago—with the incense of orange-blossoms filling the air. A real altar to love, as that odd young Frenchman had said. He had disappeared, after seeing her luggage



loaded to the shoulders of a blue-smocked station porter. No attempt to escort her further. No curiosity as to her name. Yet that strangely personal knowledge, as if he had looked inside her mind. Not exactly tall, yet with a vibrant quality that made the wiry figure conspicuous, he swung through the crowd without so much as a backward glance. Strange, the almost childish yielding to a mood of these Latins! She wondered vaguely what had prompted his flashing interest.

Through a travelers' agency she had made arrangements to motor to Sorrento that night. Despite the delay in arrival, she held to her plan. Fear had always been outside her consciousness. As a child she had clung recklessly to an idea once it lodged behind her telling eyes. She had marched into the sea at the age of two, determined to play with the big rolling waves. At six she had mounted a horse and galloped ecstatically away from the groom who was teaching her to ride. Always she enjoyed a glorious independence of thought, of action.

So tonight it never occurred to her to postpone her ride to



meet romance, as the Frenchman had put it. She almost regretted the fact that a closed car had been provided, though the air had the night tang of spring. While they placed her bags, strapping on the larger ones, she stood, one foot on the step, her face lifted. It was a night of stars—masses of them, so that the tapestry of the sky seemed woven in silver.

"Probably crowding one another," she told herself whisperingly, "for a glimpse of the antics of this queer little speck of dust known as the earth."

A bit later, out on the silent roads, she felt in those many eyes a winking whimsicality, as if they were ready to share with her their secrets. Her mood was to give them her own. The night was so smooth, so pungent with promise. The torch of Vesuvius held high across the Bay sent up its red flame, lighting the way to love.

More mystic than the moon, this starlight: uncertain as to outline, drifting as to shadows, yet luminous.

She saw that the orange-blossoms had gone. It was past their

day of blooming, and great masses of ripe fruit hung over the walls of cottage and villa. One could make out merely the suggestion of houses beyond the clustering bushes and trees. Speeding silently through the tiny villages, the car moved like a gray ghost. She felt somehow as if it must all still be part of her dreams.

They slipped into the town built on the cliffs above the Bay, and through the gateway of the Hotel Vittoria. A drowsy concierge appeared as they drew up, carried in her bags and deposited them in the hall. "Ah, yes—Mees Delano—a room and bath has been reserved." He then preceded her up a short flight of stairs. Her arrival was strangely without welcome.

A sudden sense of cold closed round her, and she knew that she had rather expected to find Roger awaiting her. Absurd, of course, at this hour! Still, if he had been coming to her—

The Italian inserted a key in a door at the top of the stairs and softly opened it. The room was enormous. Even the several easy chairs, two beds, *chaise-longue*, dressing-table and varied

other articles of furniture could not fill it. Yet its air was musty, as if shut from sunlight for a long time.

As he switched on the lights and proceeded to place her luggage, she went to the long French window and flung it wide. It gave onto a stone terrace. She stepped out. No balustrade of any kind cut her off from the adjoining room. The terrace extended the length of the house. Beyond it the gardens lay stretched at her feet. They, at least, were not asleep. Their mingled heady perfume stirred deep.

She heard the Italian's voice asking if she desired anything further, and went indoors. Without troubling to sit at the writing-table, she scrawled across a sheet of paper: "3.05 A. M. Arrived—Rhoda."

"Please see that this is on Mr. Roger Bennett's breakfast tray."

The message brought home her nearness to the man she loved.

"I shall look for a woman instead of a girl, of course," his letter had told her. "But a woman with all the qualities of the girl I knew. I should prefer to go to America and fetch you, rather than have you come to me. But since you wish it this way, and we are to live abroad, perhaps it is just as well."

She smiled. "Go to America and fetch you." How British his phrases had become during those years in India! She wondered how different he was physically. She must, of course, expect some change. But what did that matter? The Roger she loved would never alter. Strength, loyalty to ideals, control of those passions which other men casually indulged, all the qualities that for so many years had held them apart—these were the Roger who could not change. Whatever he looked like now, there would still be the distinction which for her had singled him from other men.

Toying with the sense of teasing proximity, she let her thoughts enclose him until they drifted across the borderland of dreams.

Not until the sun was high, did she awaken with an acute shock of loss. Sitting up in bed, she searched for a reason. Then suddenly it swept over her. No welcome—no message—not a flower in her room, though flowers rioted outside. She had crossed an ocean and half a continent to come to her love, and he had not even scribbled a line to greet her!

The realization came so abruptly that it struck her like a smarting blow. She swung her feet over the side of the bed and into green velvet mules. Slipping her arms into a peignoir of the changing green of the Bay, she went to the window.

The glistening southern sunlight enveloped a woman whose skin held its own warmth. Her smooth hair severely parted and drawn down over the ears was the neutral brown that reflects light or darkness. Her figure, slenderly feminine, was distinct in outline within the chiffons. Even in its stillness, there was something disquieting in that form framed in the tall window, much as the beauty before her was turbulent under its tranquillity.

She turned back into the room, telephoned her order for breakfast. Of course she could not expect Roger to communicate with her; he would wait, wanting her to rest as long as possible after the journey. Yet she confessed to a surge of relief when, next to the chocolate pot on her tray, she discovered a white envelope.

With a gesture of eager impatience, she ripped it open:

My dear:

I was astonished to learn of your arrival. Had no idea you would drive out so late. A bit incautious, I am afraid; but glad you came through safely. Luncheon at one—see you then. Love—Roger.

Her lips pressed together as she read the few lines. She was utterly ashamed of the fact that they did so to hold back tears. Absurd, of course! A mature woman to take disappointment like a baby. Roger was simply considerate enough not to disturb her rest. But after all these years, ought he to think of being considerate? Her lips twisted over the question, and she forced a smile to them. She must not be like other women in love, swift, exacting in judgment, self-torturing.

IN leisurely fashion she bathed and dressed, then strolled along the corridor. At the end was a door and short flight of steps leading to the garden. The scent of magnolia came to meet her as she opened the door, damp and rich and intriguing, overpowering in its spicy sweetness. Great, voluptuous red blossoms crowded one another among their dark leaves. Little paths began and lost themselves under the trees. Occasionally a stone bench hidden by vines came to view, and one tried to find it, as if in a labyrinth. Cool because of the shadows, there was a mysterious softness about the place.

Wandering its length, she saw a man's figure come toward her from out the gentle gloom. She took an instinctive hasty step in his direction. Then stopped. It was the young Frenchman. "Ah," he observed, quite as a matter of course, "it is good to see you. I have been waiting a long time."

Astonishment caught her mouth, holding it rigid.

"You did not think I would be here?" he observed in regretful reproach.

"To be honest," she answered severely, "I did not think of you at all."

"But certainly not," he smiled, a singularly boyish grin. "And the meeting with—"

"How do you happen to be here?" she interrupted hastily, recalling that on the train he had made no mention of a visit to Sorrento.

"I too came south to search for romance. And since I can find none of my own, am I not to be forgiven for basking in the reflected glow of another's?"

"You mean you are here merely because I am?"

"Exactly," he bowed.

"Well,"—she sat down suddenly on a bench,—"*that is amazing.*"

"Not at all." He leaned over her. "Must all emotion be personal? Can I not know the thrill of seeing your love-story fulfilled?"

SHE searched the glow in the eyes above hers. Most vital eyes.

She wondered what was actually behind them.

"And the hero of your story?" he put softly.

"I've not seen him yet."

"Not seen—" He took a startled backward step.

"You forget, I came by motor—in the wee sma' hours."

"And he did not rush to meet you?"

"He did not know when I was coming."

Even as she spoke the words, they irritated her. Why should she apologize for Roger to this stranger?

"Had I been the man," he remarked speculatively, more to himself than to her, "I should have known." Then turning to her once more with his disarming abruptness: "Pardon—Madame was glorious in the sunlight this morning. The gleam upon her skin—it was enchanting."

She gave a start, as if propelled by an electric shock.

"Where were you?"

"In the room next to that of Madame."

She moved swiftly along the bench—away from him.

"I was most fortunate to procure it," he added.

"You deliberately asked for it?" she found herself questioning.

"But most certainly."

"What an astonishing person you are!"

"No," he said simply. "But an honest one. Why should I not seek to bring myself as close to joy as possible?"

In complete silence she looked at him a moment. Then a tricky smile, more of eyes than lips, played with her features. He met the smile with his own. It was exactly as if thoughts had been exchanged, though no word was spoken.

Into this absolute silence, which might have meant everything, anything or nothing, came a man who had just descended from a car at the hotel door. He was directly in front of the other two before either saw him. Then the woman's expression changed completely. She got up quickly, eagerly, glad recognition filling her eyes. The Frenchman bowed, turned, and immediately was lost to view along one of the tiny labyrinthian paths.

"Roger!"

A sudden tremor seized her, a wave of intense realization that now he stood before her, the man round whom her life had surged. Yet she saw no detail of feature or outline. She knew only that distance, time, had been bridged, and he was close to her.

He took her two outstretched hands.

"Well, well," he smiled, "here we are—here we are!"

She sent her gaze upward through brimming tears.

"Roger," she murmured, "think of it! After all these years!"

"Nice, isn't it, eh?" he said.

She stood utterly still. At last, through the haze before her eyes, his face came like a face out of a mist. More severe as to outline in some inexplicable way, the hair more sparse, the eyes not quite so blue as she liked to recall them. But handsome, with features carefully modeled, as if a sculptor had planned them with every measurement in perfect proportion. And his tall soldierly figure had the same distinctive assurance of bearing.

Silently she lifted her lips. He gave a cautious glance about,



"I wish to speak with you," he said hurriedly. "You must let me in—please."

then hastily bent to them. The kiss, somehow, left her quite cold and with a certain brutal amusement. Caution—in the heart of the garden!

She sat down abruptly. He took the place beside her.

"Looking very fit," he observed.

"I feel it," she answered, gazing at him almost as a child pleads for a smile.

"Nice trip?"

"I was coming to you, Roger."

"Of course—"

"Aren't you glad to see me?"

"Glad to see—" He seemed both shocked and puzzled by the query. "But, my dear Rhoda—what an absurd question! Didn't I send for you?"

"Well, you seem—oh, I don't know—preoccupied, perhaps."

"I've been here two days, waiting for you. And bored to death, I don't mind telling you. All day yesterday, and again this morning, I drove about trying to locate a decent golf-course. It's hopeless!"

"This morning, you went out to look for—" She stared at him, completely uncomprehending.

"Certainly. I'm an early riser—six-thirty. And I knew you wouldn't be up. Women like to sleep after a long trip. You forget, my dear, I've been a married man."

"Yes, of course—I see. I've no right to expect an impetuous lover, have I?" In spite of the question, she spoke as if he were not there.

"We're neither of us children, you know," he answered in a matter-of-fact manner.

"I rather hoped we might be—together."

He gave a tolerant smile.

"All women have that idea, more or less, I dare say. But men aren't built that way."

"Was—was Mrs. Bennett—a child, more or less?"

She found her lips forming the words absolutely without her volition, and saw him frown.

"She was a highly nervous woman."

"Roger," she burst out, "you've been unhappy all these years, haven't you?"

"Elsie and I were never mated. We weren't interested in the same things—or the same people."

"And you have loved me?"

(Continued on page 108)

TWO Flights up

By Mary Roberts Rinehart

Illustrated by John Alonzo Williams

The Story So Far:

WHAT lay behind the deep shadow of calamity which loomed over that strange Washington household? To Howard Warrington, a bond-salesman newly domiciled therein as a paying guest, understanding came step by amazing step. First he learned that there was no Hilda—that the maidservant to whom Mrs. Bayne so often and elegantly referred was a myth, and that the housework was done by her sister Margaret and her daughter Holly. Well, that was a fiction common enough, of course. But when late one night Warrington smelled gas, traced it to the source, came to the locked door of the kitchen, broke in and found Aunt Margaret neatly lain down to die on the floor with all the burners of the stove turned on—that was nothing to smile over.

Aunt Margaret recovered—and rather surprisingly she soon thereafter married an old and persistent suitor, one James Cox, the trusted employee of a downtown department store. Yet Warrington's rescue of Aunt Margaret did little to break down the reserve the Baynes maintained toward him; and he could only rage inwardly when wealthy, prim and fashionable Furness Brooks came to call. More and more often Warrington, passing the drawing-room door on his way upstairs, saw Brooks there with Holly, and heard Mrs. Bayne at her so-genteel tea-table, making her eternal allusions to the apocryphal Hilda.

He raged inwardly, yes, until the engagement was announced. And then he burst out in protest to Holly.

"Marry your popinjay!" he stormed at her. "Go on mincing through life. Drink your tea and hold your little finger out! I'm through."

Suddenly he saw the engagement ring on her left hand, and he lifted it and looked at it. From the ring he looked at her hand; it was small and shapely, but it bore the scars of "Hilda's" work. "You poor little fool," he said gently, and kissed it.

It was soon thereafter that Mrs. Bayne came to Warrington with a bond and asked him to turn it into cash for her—she knew little of such things. He realized of course that the money would go to buy the clothes and the little intimate things with which Holly would go to her husband; yet he could only acquiesce. What he did not know at this time, though nearly everyone else in town knew it, was that Tom Bayne, Holly's father, was in the penitentiary, whither he had been sent after stealing a large amount in securities from the bank of which he had been cashier. Mrs. Bayne and Holly knew, moreover, that he was soon to be released.

Warrington learned about these things presently, however. The day after he sold the bond for Mrs. Bayne, she went on an extravagant shopping expedition; and Warrington explained to Holly, when she questioned him, the source of her mother's sudden

SHORTLY after you finish this latest of its distinguished author's stories in these pages, you will have an opportunity of seeing it in translation, so to speak, on the films, for which it is now being prepared. And strangely enough, in view of the well-known tendencies of picture-producers, the film will be offered under the same title as the story here. Mrs. Rinehart's last play, "The Bat," it may be noted, has been one of the most successful ever produced, in both the stage and screen versions.

wealth. Late that night he was startled by a noise and a light in the attic; and making his way thither, he found Holly kneeling over a suitcase full of bonds she had just discovered under the loose floor boards, concealed by a trunk. Holly told him her father's story then, and he offered to help her restore the bonds to the bank. It was only later that he realized that he too had been made a criminal when he sold that presumably stolen bond.

Holly and Warrington decided the suitcase must be gotten out of the house at once before the bond was traced and search made; so he took it to the Cox flat and asked Margaret to care for it. But Warrington was followed by the detectives already on his trail, with the result that the Cox apartment was raided,

the suitcase found and James Cox—Honest James, as he was so proud of being called—was arrested. They let him go again after his employer Steinfeldt vouched for him, but he was broken-hearted at the indignity.

And Warrington also, after once slipping away from the detectives, was taken into custody and brought before the district attorney.

"I'll tell you everything I know," Warrington told that official, "except how I got the bond I sold."

"I know all the rest. Now think a minute. If this case ever gets to a jury, there are two angles to it: either the Bayne family is involved, as I've told you, or you are—you and Cox. Better come clean, Warrington."

"It will take some thinking over. I don't care about myself, but I—I didn't sleep much last night, and I haven't had any breakfast. I need food, I guess, and a chance to think."

"I imagine we can provide both of those," said the District Attorney cheerfully, and rang a bell. (*The story continues in detail.*)

MRS. BAYNE had had a wonderful morning. Nothing was too fine for her; she wanted only the best.

"Haven't you a better quality?" she would demand, in quite her old-time manner, and out would come boxes and wrappings; and out of those, again, wonderful things: stockings and handkerchiefs, underwear and linen.

But she did not buy Holly's household linens at Steinfeldt and Roder's. Not since Margaret's marriage had she been in that store.

By noon she was very tired. She went up to the restaurant and ordered herself a frugal luncheon, and while waiting for it, she listed her expenditures so far. She had done extremely well, she reflected. True, Holly would not have so many of each sort of thing—she herself had had two dozen of everything when she had married—but what Holly had was very good.



"You'd better come downstairs, honey," Mrs. McCook said. "Just leave the rest to me."

Mrs. Bayne was in high good humor, and when the head waiter remembered her and came to speak to her, it was like old times indeed.

"Glad to see you here again, Mrs. Bayne. You don't honor us any more."

And she acknowledged this tribute with a gracious condescension.

"I seldom lunch downtown any more," she said. "But I always find it pleasant here."

She had ordered a New England boiled dinner, because it was ready and cheap. The cabbage she knew gave her indigestion; but she was above indigestion that day. She was hungry; she ate heartily, and after luncheon she made some more purchases, looking wistfully at a gray gown with a chinchilla collar for her-

self for the wedding, and then passing it by. There may have been a moment when she thought of those other bonds, lying where they had lain for years and doing nobody any good, but she put the temptation away from her. And what she called Holly's money was not to be spent for herself. Not one cent.

But the indigestion began to bother her. She went to the soda fountain and got some baking soda, and then took a taxi home. The floor was piled with her packages; a boy had to carry them out for her. But she could not wait for their delivery. She wanted to get home, and spread them out on her bed and gloat over them, like old times.

Like old times.

She took out the money for her taxi fare, and then carefully closed her bag. After a time she dozed off comfortably.

AT the house Holly had mechanically finished her belated morning work and was anxiously watching for her mother.

Holly had worked hard, for she did not want to think—not just yet, anyhow. She had told her story, and they had not believed her. She was free, free as air. But Howard Warrington was under suspicion. She was free, and they were after him, who had done nothing, known nothing.

Beyond that, her mind at first refused to travel. She felt helpless and resentful, and that was all.

It was noon before she sat down and began really to think; and then her thinking got her nowhere. Some memory of Furness that morning came back, and she wondered if she had driven him away for good. The thought left her entirely indifferent, save for her inner knowledge that, for the first time since she had known him, she had been absolutely honest with him then.

"Honest for once!" she thought. "All along I've been acting and lying. It's been wrong. It's been immoral."

But wasn't there a fundamental immorality in the whole situation? Not only the bond. That had been an accident, a temptation in a weak moment. But all the rest of it, their pretense at gentility, their snobberies and hypocrisies; how about them?

She was through with them. If, after it all came out, she told Furness how she felt about him and he still wanted to marry her, she would. But she would tell him first.

And it was out of that conclusion, slowly and painfully reached, that she came to another. She would marry him, but first her mother would have to clear things up. She would have to tell the police about the bond.

It would not be so terrible, after all. They would not arrest her mother any more than they had arrested her. One could go to the District Attorney and tell him the truth, and so long as there was no conspiracy, and the money was returned, there would be no punishment. She knew that now.

She made a bargain with herself: if her mother would clear Howard, she would pay the price. She would marry Furness if he still wanted her.

She went down the stairs when she heard the front door open, and found Mrs Bayne in the lower hall, her arms filled with bundles and her face radiant.

"Oh, my dear," she said. "Such a morning! I'm so tired I could drop."

She dropped her parcels on the hall table and sat down, a trifle breathlessly.

"As soon as I can walk, we'll go up and open these things," she went on. "I bought a new rug for the vestibule. The old one was dreadful."

"Have you had anything to eat?" There was a new gentleness in the girl's voice. To see all this happiness and to know one was going to kill it—it was cruel.

"I lunched downtown, and I ate cabbage. Stupid of me, but I like it, and one can't cook it in the house. It smells so. I think I'll take a little more baking soda."

She felt around in her lap, preparatory to rising, then still sitting, she glanced about her on the floor.

"What is it you are looking for, Mother?" Holly asked.

"My purse," replied Mrs. Bayne. "It's here somewhere. I've dropped it."

But it was not there. Nor was it in the hall, nor in the vestibule, nor on the street. Afterward Holly was always to remember her mother, the agonized look on her face and the stiffness of her lips as she talked on.

"I had it in the taxicab. I took out a dollar for the man; see, I still have the change." She held out her hand. "And then I closed it again. I must have dropped it there."

"How much was in it?"

"Six hundred and ten dollars."

Mrs. Bayne turned slowly and stared at herself in the mirror. Then, without any warning, she sank on her knees and fell over in a dead faint.



Chapter Twenty-six

JAMES still sat in the living-room. The events of the day and Warrington's visit that evening had left him benumbed. The very futility of anger left him weaponless. He was ready to shake his fist at the world, but the world was callous to the shaking of fists. It recognized only effective action—and he could not act.

For the first time since his marriage he did not go to bed when Margaret did. He was not sensual, but for a long time he had been very lonely. The sense of her bodily nearness in the double bed had been happiness; the longing of his solitary soul for companionship was partially eased by the contact with her not beautiful but warm and alive human body.

Something of this he must have felt in advance, when they were buying their furniture.

"No twin beds for me, Al," he said to the salesman. "I'm old-fashioned. My father and mother used the same bed for

thirty years—and settled many a squabble in it, like as not. Anyhow, that's what we're going to have."

And Margaret had blushed and agreed.

But that night he was alone, marooned by misery, cut off from her by despair and suspicion.

"Wont you come to bed, James? You need to sleep and forget things for a while."

"Not now," he said, and looked at her with eyes at once hard and hurt.

"I could warm some milk. If you have something in your stomach, it will make you sleepy."

"You go to bed," he told her roughly. "I'll come in later."

He heard her moving about, undressing, the slow sound of the brush over her hair, the two small knocks of her bedroom slippers on the floor, and the soft rustle as she got into the bed. He wanted to go in, to kneel beside her and put his head down and be comforted.

But how could he?

She was keeping something from him, something that she and Warrington both knew.

At two o'clock in the morning he took off his shoes and tiptoed into the bedroom. Margaret was wide awake and stirred

as he entered, but he only took an extra quilt from the top of the closet and went out again. When toward daylight she crept to the living-room door he was asleep on the davenport, fully dressed but for his shoes and coat.

Things were no better between them in the morning. He shaved while she got the breakfast, but before he ate, he went down and bought a morning paper, and she found him in the living-room with the paper on the floor, and what was left of his world in ruins.



"I'm damned if I understand you," he said. "If the moment you get into trouble, you want to get rid of me, what are you going to do when you're married to me?"

He shook his head obstinately. "I don't want to sleep," he protested vehemently. "I've got to think. I've got to think this thing out."

He could not get into the same bed with her, with that suspicion between them. And he distrusted himself. He felt that if he did, he would somehow weaken. He would not be able to think clearly. He would even be sorry for her.

She was suffering; he knew that. All her new vitality had been drained from her. She might have been the Margaret of six months ago. He was afraid to look at her hands, so sure he was that she had clenched the left one.

"Your breakfast's ready, James," said Margaret quietly.

"I don't want any breakfast."

Her look was piteous, but he did not see it.

"You can't work all day without food."

Then he turned on her.

"Work!" he said. "Do you suppose I can go to the store after that?" He pointed to the paper, then picked it up and thrust it at her savagely.

"Read it," he said. "Look what you've done to me. Read it and smile!"

"I! You know better than that."

"Oh, I do, do I? You knew what was in that bag. You arranged to have it brought here. I'm no fool. You lied last night. Look here, have you and your precious family been living off that stuff all this time? That's what I want to know, and by God I'm going to know it."

"If you can think that," said Margaret, "you can think anything." And she left the room.

She heard him go out soon after, not slamming the door but going quietly, as though ashamed of his recent violence. She moved about, automatically doing her usual morning work, but inwardly in a turmoil. It couldn't go on. It must not go on. As between James and Annie, it must be James.

She would have to tell him, and let him make such use of it as he would.

The decision gave her courage. She took off her morning dress and put on her street clothes. While she dressed, she listened, but there was no sound of his latchkey in the lock, none of that preliminary clearing of the throat which always preceded his entrance. Waiting for him, with the habit of years she picked up her sewing-basket; but when she saw the fragment of Holly's wedding-gown, she put it down again.

For the first time she saw all the destruction that would follow her confession to James—that it involved Holly's future too.

Unlike Holly, her experience of the day before had left her in terror of the law. Out of her ignorance she drew a picture of her sister in prison. It would kill her; she would never live through the trial.

Her imagination leaped on. She saw Mrs. Bayne gone, and Holly's engagement broken. She saw the shabby old house, and only Tom Bayne and Holly in it. Time going on, and Tom Bayne creeping about, a sick man, a friendless man—and Holly's youth going, gone, like her own. "I can't do it," she told herself. But she knew she would do it.

By noon she had worked herself into a state of frenzy, and then the telephone rang. She was so certain it was James that her heart leaped; but the call was from Simmons' grocery store on Kelsey Street.

"We have a message for you, Mrs. Cox," said Simmons himself. "Your sister aint so well, and Miss Holly would like you to come right up."

Chapter Twenty-seven

MRS. BAYNE lay in her bed. There were purplish shadows under her eyes, and she was lying quite flat, by the doctor's orders.

She was very comfortable. Now and then she reached out a white hand to the glass of water beside her and took a sip, and always at such times somebody came and helped her to raise her head; sometimes it was Holly, sometimes Margaret. Now and then she dozed a little, but mostly she lay still.

There was a fire on the hearth, and she could hear it crackling.

Once she said, conscious that she was not alone: "It is nice to be waited on. Like old times." And Holly from the hearth



answered her cheerfully enough: "Why shouldn't you be waited on? It's a poor house that can't have one lady!"

Her hearing was preternaturally acute, and the front door seemed to be opening and closing rather often.

"Who's down stairs?" she asked once. "Some one keeps going out and coming in."

"It's Aunt Margaret. She's been telephoning the taxi company again."

"It hasn't been found?"

"Not yet, but the men don't report until six o'clock. Even if they don't find it, what do we care?" She came to the side of the bed and touched her mother's forehead. "We've still got each other," she said shakily.

"Has Furness been in?"

"No. I didn't expect him today. Now close your eyes and see if you can't sleep again."

Toward evening she really fell asleep. The firelight flickered in the darkened room, making it soothingly warm and restful;



"If I was a young lady," said Mr. Steinfeldt, "and a young gentleman did a thing like that for me, I'd think: 'I better make up to him.'"

"Of course he's worried, but he's sure to go back. Probably he is just walking around."

"He didn't even take his overcoat."

Once Holly asked her if she knew whether Mr. Cox and Howard Warrington had met, and Margaret at first said no. Later on, however, she said they had; she had sent a message to James by Warrington one night. But Holly did not tell her the District Attorney's theory. She was troubled enough without that.

It was after one of the painful silences that Margaret suddenly announced her decision.

"I'm going to tell him, Holly. I've got to."

"I think you must," said Holly quietly. "Only, he'd better know what the doctor said today. She can't stand a shock."

Margaret said nothing.

At six o'clock Holly boiled some eggs and made toast, and they ate, the two of them, in the kitchen, because it was warm. While she was preparing the meal, Margaret went out once more to telephone, but Holly had no need to ask the result.

Margaret sat stiff and silent at the kitchen table, busy with her own thoughts, and Holly said very little. Once she asked Margaret a question, but the answer to it was vague and faintly hostile.

"Do you think Father told her the day she went to see him?"

"I haven't an idea. He might. He put it there."

Holly sat with her chin in her hands and gazed at her.

"Still, I would like to think he did," she persisted. "That he told her, so she could send it back. Wouldn't you?"

"Don't fool yourself. If he told her at all, it wasn't for that." Holly made an impatient gesture.

"There are still some decent motives in the world, you know, and some honest people."

"There are," said Margaret, rising. "There is my James. And look what it's brought him to!"

She put down her cup and went upstairs, and soon afterward she came down with her wraps on.

"I'm going now," she said heavily. "She's still sleeping, and her color is good. But I don't quite like leaving you alone with her."

"I'll be all right. And I'll not be alone in the house. Mr. Warrington will be here."

Had Margaret been less absorbed in her own troubles, she would have seen Holly's sensitive color rise.

Holly saw her to the door and kissed her good-by, but Mar-

her pillows in their fresh slips were smooth and soft. Tragedy, grim and heart-breaking, was reigning downstairs, but in her sheltered bed, her firelit room, Mrs. Bayne went peacefully to sleep.

Holly went down the stairs.

Margaret was in the drawing-room. There was no fire there, and under the hard top light of the chandelier her face looked drawn and old. Each time she had gone to the grocery store she had called up the flat, only to be told that her number did not answer, and unreasoning terror began to possess her.

"I'm afraid," she told Holly. "Unless you knew him, you couldn't understand. He might do anything. *Anything.*"

Holly tried to comfort her. The dog had adopted the house as his permanent home and now lay beside her on the old sofa, and as she talked, she stroked him. She felt almost as though she and the dog were alone in the room. This Margaret sitting across from her, detached and frozen, her mind on the husband Holly hardly knew, was scarcely more than conscious of her.

garet was still frozen. There was a sag to her shoulders that had been absent now for months. It was as though she was afraid to go home. Holly closed the door and went in, shivering.

She and the dog were alone. She got a coat from the hall closet and spread it over the two of them on the sofa. She knew Warrington had brought the dog. It was his dog. She pulled it closer to her and tucked the coat in around it.

She was waiting for Warrington. Now and then she looked at the clock. She knew he was all right. When she had reached the house that morning, a dapper-looking young man had been waiting on the doorstep, and had told her with a twinkle in his eyes that he had called for a suit of clothes.

He explained, not much, but that Warrington had torn something and needed other clothes.

"But he is all right?" she had asked. The young man had laughed cheerfully, with the air of one who has a secret and merry joke.

"Sure, he's all right," he said, "except for a little wear and tear." And he had gone up the stairs chuckling.

So now Holly was waiting. Soon he would come and tell her what to do, and she would do it. An anchor, he had said; but he was to be more than that: he was to be steersman, quiet and strong and resourceful, to pilot her out of these troubled waters.

The clock moved on. Nine, ten, eleven, and still he did not come. At midnight she put the dog to bed and went up the stairs. Her mother was still sleeping. She sat down by the fire; and confused with thinking, the warmth wrapping her like a blanket, she too finally slept.

AT half-past one that morning Mrs. Bayne awakened. She felt completely rested and refreshed. She sat up in bed and took another sip of water, and then made out Holly's quiet figure in the chair by the dying fire. She got out of bed, and taking one of her blankets, put it carefully around the girl's body. Holly stirred but did not waken.

Mrs. Bayne moved about the room. She knew that if her purse had been returned, they would have left it out for her to see; so she examined the bureau and the bedside table, but it was not there. She felt no particular shock at the discovery; she had had very little hope of its return. But her mind, rested from her long sleep, turned at once to the practical problem of the loss.

Sitting on the side of her bed, in her slippers and dressing-gown, she surveyed the situation. She could see, in the corner between the mantel and her high mahogany wardrobe, the white boxes which contained her purchases. She knew what was in each one of them; no miser ever hoarded and counted gold as she had hoarded and counted their contents.

At least they had those, and they were paid for.

Her mind traveled to the big young man she thought asleep in the room above. He had been very obliging about the bond; he would be sorry to know she had lost most of what he had got for it. Really, they had been most fortunate. He was a gentleman, and then to have him know about bonds and such things, that had been fortunate too.

She was not consciously evading temptation as she had that morning. Rather, in her new ease of mind, she was subconsciously savoring it. This morning it had been weakness, but whatever she might do now was out of dire necessity. But she was in no hurry. Why hurry, when she knew that she had above her this treasure-trove of security, this wall between her and privation, lying snug and tight beneath the attic floor?

For just a minute her mind turned to her husband. He had made her promise to send it to the Harrison Bank. Well, so she would, but there was no hurry about that, either. They would get it all except the one bond, or maybe two; surely that was little enough, considering what she and Tom had paid for it.

Out of her new peace and odd lightness of mind she pitied him. He had paid, over and over, and now he was sick. He had always loathed being sick; it had made him as sulky as a bad child. It seemed strange now to think that once he had lived in this very room, shared this very bed.

It would be even stranger, too, to have him back again. A little bit of coquetry revived in her; she wondered if she had changed very much. Her former fastidious distaste of having him back was softened. They would have to be kind to him, she and Holly. But Holly would not be there; she was going to be married.

She rose after a while and got her nail-file and a clean handkerchief from her dresser. She had a dislike of soiling her fingers. Then from the mantelpiece she cautiously took down a candle,

and lighting it, went out into the passage. Holly had not moved.

As Mrs. Bayne mounted the stairs, she felt dizzy and weak; her knees shook, and the candle wavered, but she went on and up, with a faint smile on her face. Up and up. Past Mr. Warrington's door, carefully, carefully; the attic steps now, and a strong draught from some open window, almost blowing out the candle. And then the top of the stairs and the end of all worry. And treasure-trove.

She placed the candle on the top of a packing-box and set to work. The trunk had to be moved, and it would not do to drag it along the floor; she inched it over, lifting it first at one end and then at the other; a dozen, two dozen efforts, each of which made her dizzy and more shaken. But at last the boards were uncovered. Oh, sweet boards, oh, beautiful burden-lifting boards! She sat down and ran her delicate hands across them.

Then she lifted them.

Chapter Twenty-eight

THE ceremonies which had preceded Howard Warrington's incarceration were of the simplest. He was taken before the desk of the police sergeant in the basement of the City Hall, booked as a suspicious character, and after a superficial search was placed in a detention cell, one of a dozen or so along a small cement-floored corridor—an interior cell, lighted only indirectly from the windows by the Sergeant's desk outside.

As a place of detention it was admirable; as a sanctuary for rest and thought it was beyond words. There was a constant movement along the cement floor of the corridor outside, and in the cubicle next to him a little Italian, brought in with a demijohn of wine, alternately wailed and chattered to himself.

Police of various ranks came and went, their heavy voices echoing and reëchoing. Men mopped the floor, rattled brass cuspids and dragged chairs about. Over all was the thick odor of unwashed human bodies, poor sanitary arrangements, carbolic acid and dead cigar-ends.

He sat down on his bench-bed and lighted a cigarette, and almost immediately men all about him began to beg for tobacco. He tossed a half-dozen or so across the passage, but one of them fell short, and there ensued a struggle between two negroes to reach it. There was no humor in their efforts, but grim and desperate resolution; they stretched and panted, grunted and cursed, and on this strange contest a dozen other men gazed, their faces pressed against the bars.

Toward night he began to suffer from claustrophobia; in the dim light the cell seemed to be closing in on him, and the air to be heavy and unbreathable; he was covered with cold sweat. But he knew the claustrophobia was only a reflex of his own mental condition, his inner conviction that he was trapped and done for. Men did not suffer this ignominy to have it forgotten. They went on through life, marked men, shamed men. Guilt was news; but exoneration was buried in the back pages.

And who was there to exonerate him? Mrs. Bayne. Suppose he broke his promise to Holly and told them that? How could he prove it? And what would Holly do? He knew quite well what she would do. She would simply repeat that she had taken the bond herself and given it to him to sell.

Round and round. Round and round. The Italian wailed and babbled. Drunks came in, were shoved along the corridor and locked away. Then there was a scuffle going on outside, and a voice that seemed to echo out of some troubled dream. He sat up and listened to it. It was truculent, drunken and familiar.

"You leggo me," it was saying. "I'm all right. Wha' the hell you doin' anyhow? Leggo, I tell you."

It was James Cox. Honest James Cox.

They dragged him past the cell and on to an empty one farther along. Warrington heard the metallic crash as they closed and locked him in, heard James stumble to his bed and drop on it, still thickly muttering, and later on heard his heavy breathing as he slept.

EARLY in the morning the cells were evacuated, and a shuffling line of men moved out along the corridor, for hearings, sentences and fines. James Cox was among them, his head bent, his gait unsteady. As he passed, Warrington saw the bewilderment in his face.

At nine o'clock they took Warrington back to the District Attorney's office. He had not shaved for two days, and he felt less a man for the dark stubble on his face. His linen, bad enough the morning before, was in (Continued on page 148)

By
Virginia Dale



"I will not," stormed Mr. Bebee. "Twenty thousand or nothing."

Sold

Illustrated by H. Weston Taylor

Familiar at first hand with life in Europe and in South America, it is the household side of existence as carried on by average Americans that interests Virginia Dale most—apart from her professional work as one of the very few feminine dramatic critics of a metropolitan paper in this country.

THE Bebees had finally decided to sell the house. They had talked about it for two solid years; Mr. Bebee, as he unskillfully shoveled coal on winter nights, Mrs. Bebee, when the current maid left unexpectedly, declaring life in the suburbs to be "too lonesome." When Mrs. Bebee returned from visiting her sister in Los Angeles, it was settled. She had made up her mind—and her husband's.

Mr. Bebee thought of it feebly in bed between wondering if he had indeed switched off the basement light and trying to make up his mind whether it was worth while paddling down to see.

"And always the most perfect weather out there," Mrs. Bebee's voice went on in the darkness. "Pick oranges from our own trees for breakfast."

As the thought of moving to California expanded within Mr. Bebee, he rather liked it. Especially on cold, windy days. He enjoyed meeting his neighbor, Withers, on a raucous February morning and saying lightly: "Well, this time next year the wife and I'll be out where the sun shines. No more shoveling coal for me. How much does it take to see you through the winter, d'you think?"

Mrs. Bebee made her announcement the day Mrs. Charles had the Bridge Club, the day Mrs. Charles with all her money, (but wasn't it just like her?) gave that cheap little vase for first prize. "Well, ladies," said Mrs. Bebee, disregarding her partner's no-trump bid, "well, ladies, it looks as if I wouldn't

be here next year." Mrs. Bebee dropped her bomb casually as she laid down her cards. "Yes, we've decided to move to California." She placed an ace triumphantly. "As soon," she amended, "as we sell the house."

The ladies made polite noises. "Oh, my dear Flora, what shall we do without you?" "How can you go so far away?" "What will Mr. Bebee do without his business? He's such an active man."

"Oh, he'll enjoy it," said Mr. Bebee's wife. "Besides, there's real-estate. My brother-in-law tells me everyone in Los Angeles dabbles, you know, in real-estate. And of course there's no telling when you'll find an oil-well or something on your property."

Everyone except Mrs. Bebee's partner was impressed. You could always trust Flora Bebee, thought the partner, to be no help in a no-trump bid. (Of course this was before anyone knew what a cheap little thing the first prize was.)

But it was certainly settled, the Bebees' hegira. Nothing remained—except to sell the house.

"Ought to get twenty thousand dollars for it, easy," Mr. Bebee ruminated aloud over his evening paper. "Think of all the shrubs I set out only last spring." His mind dwelt quite tenderly upon those shrubs.

"You'll have plenty of shrubs in California," Mrs. Bebee reminded him. "You can't expect anyone to pay a fancy price for the house on account of a syringa bush. I think myself it'd be better to take less and go quicker."

"Oh, you do? Well, I'll tell you now I'm not going to give the place away. What's the hurry? Wouldn't be so bad to stay here through the summer, anyhow. I'd sort of like to see if that rambler blooms this year."

"It would be much more sensible, Andrew, to get a place out there and get new ramblers started. As long as we're going, let's go. That's what I say."

Having been married thirteen years, Mr. Bebee did not argue. But he cherished his own ideas silently. "Bought with my money," his mind grumbled. "You'd think I'd have something to say about things." He had an aggravated feeling that he was being uprooted in spite of himself.

"Did you see the real-estate man?" Mrs. Bebee inquired the following night over the rice pudding.

"Um—no."

"Well! I never in my life saw your equal. 'Put off' and 'put off.' That's you. Now, listen: if you don't see that man tomorrow, I'll see him myself."

"Well, now, we don't want to rush into this thing. Just because I've got the business on a substantial enough footing to leave it running along with Kelso, there's no reason for jumping every which way."

"All right!" said Mrs. Bebee. "I'll see the real-estate man!"

But Mr. Bebee saw him bright and early the next morning, feel-

ed in a pleasant bedside manner. "Now, twenty is the asking price, but you will empower me to accept—er, eighteen—"

"I will not!" stormed Mr. Bebee. "Twenty or nothing, and I don't give a damn whether you sell or not." The Necktie, preserving its equanimity, wished it had gone into the bond business.

Mr. Bebee called up his wife immediately after, informing her he had once more done as he was told, but that it was a bad time for house-selling, and he wouldn't be surprised if nothing came of it.

He was suddenly aware by the tone of Mrs. Bebee's voice that she was telling him to do something or other.

"What did you say?" he inquired plaintively.

"I told you not to forget to order coal. We'll need another five tons at least."

"Good Lord! All right." As he issued into the foul day he played agreeably with the idea of a climate out in God's country where a man wouldn't have to burn up all the money he could get his hands on.

It was after that visit to the coal-dealer's that Mr. Bebee became as vocal about the joys of California life as his wife. But he still clung to the idea that she was making him go. A man must make some kind of a stand for independence. And so Mr. Bebee chose to split with Mrs. Bebee on the price of the house.

"You're simply pig-headed!" declared Mrs. Bebee, misunder-

standing his gesture.

"Suppose we do take eighteen thousand? Even the real-estate man said we'd have to compromise."

"Compromise be—"
"Andrew!"

"Well, I won't compromise, as you call it, if it means taking a cent under twenty. It's been a good little home, hasn't it? If I've got to leave I'm not going to do it for nothing."

"You're just as anxious to leave as I am."

"Well, I don't know about that. Besides—don't you sort of hate to give up the place, Flora? We've been very happy here, and, well—"

"You always were sentimental, Andrew."

"Sentimental!" moaned Mr. Bebee indignantly. "If that isn't just like you! Sentimental! I tell you if you'd been through the mill like I have you'd know how little time I have for sentiment."

"It isn't a question of time; it's a state of being," she informed him pleasantly. "My dear Andrew, all men are sentimental. Sometimes it's a woman. Oh, I don't

mean a—er—passion." Mrs. Bebee flushed at the word, but she read modern novels and she knew what she was talking about. "It's just a sort of sudden softness. I suppose," she added thoughtfully, "I ought to be glad you only get soft about a house."

"Soft!" boomed Mr. Bebee. "How you talk! And as for women—I don't think it's really decent of you, Flora. Where you get your ideas I don't know. At least you give me credit for not being sentimental over any woman—ever—I hope?"

"Except one," she answered softly.



"Oh, I don't know anything!" She said it as if it were a virtue.

ing rather as if he were selling himself down the river. He kept remembering his garden. . . .

The agent was a debonair young man with an exceedingly nice taste in neckwear. He tapped a gold pencil tentatively as Mr. Bebee talked. "And not a cent less than twenty thousand dollars," said Mr. Bebee determinedly; it seemed to him that if he made that point clear he might, after all, be on the spot when the rambler bloomed.

"Yes, of course," said the Necktie. Mr. Bebee felt it was with the necktie he was doing business. "But of course," the Necktie countered, "if you're going to sell, you'll—er—compromise. Now tell me, confidentially, what's your bed-rock price?"

"I've told you," responded Mr. Bebee vehemently.

"You must take me into your confidence," the Necktie persist-



"Oh, you're not old enough to have a daughter as old as I," she said prettily.

St. Patrick's Day. "I won't show it to a soul while it's torn up," she declared. And at her husband's mild surprise at her change of plans she became bitterly explanatory. "I'm not going to have an inch that isn't in apple-pie order. No one's going to see a thing but perfect neatness."

Achieving "perfect neatness" was a harrowing process. There were so many things one didn't know what to do with. Should she save that old rocker, for instance, or give it away now? They wouldn't be taking it with them. And all the extra heavy winter woollens. They wouldn't be needing those! But it seemed a shame to give them away too; you never could tell when they'd come in handy. And there was Mr. Bebee's old raincoat and the enlargement of Uncle Taylor in its wide oak frame, and all the empty jelly jars. Would it pay to pack the jelly jars?

A subtle thought stole into the minds of the householders: was it worth while to move after all? The weather was getting warmer right along now, and, well—they had a lot of good friends here—

There was a nibble at the end of March—a couple who offered three thousand dollars down and the rest on a mortgage. It was the only time any of the curious parade had reached the point of price, but the Bebees cast them and their offer out of their lives with scorn.

And then the Farneys came. Mr. Farney was a buoyant little man with a mustache, who loved the start of surprise pleasant strangers gave when they said: "This girl your daughter! Why, she looks more like your sister!"

The Farney girl (her father called her Fleeta) was the sort of girl the old folks decry nowadays—and envy. She was slim and swift and sure, and Mr. Bebee began by wishing he had a child exactly like her.

The Farneys were delighted with the house. Fleeta was effervescent. She tripped after Mrs. Bebee's solid heels and was engaging and unintelligent about everything. "Oh, I love this bedroom," bubbled Fleeta. "Those curtains are *too* sweet. Oh, chintz? Oh, I don't know *anything*!" She said it as if it were a virtue. She barely glanced at the linen closet and the pantry and the really gaudy kitchen stove. Mrs. Bebee closed the warming oven with some asperity.

"If those Farneys take the place," she told her husband after the invasion, "we wouldn't know it if we came back in six months. That girl doesn't know any more about housekeeping than the cat."

"Well, we don't expect to come back. That's the idea."

"She paid no more attention when I was explaining about my lovely laundry tubs—"

"She's a nice little thing," offered Mr. Bebee. Mrs. Bebee remembered that afterward.

"Except one?" he repeated ferociously. "Of all the accusations I ever heard in my life! Who, for heaven's sake?"

"Me," said Mrs. Bebee complacently. "Me, Andrew, or we never would have been married, dear."

A trickle of prospective purchasers began to invade the house, headed mostly by the Necktie: couples with eerie curiosity regarding cupboards and closet space and summer screens, and was the garage large enough for two cars? "Two cars!" scoffed Mrs. Bebee. "And did you notice the old rattletrap they came in?"

Other couples potted about the discouraged-looking shrubbery of early March and looked at Mr. Bebee suspiciously as he dilated on the verdure to come; children of prospective buyers raced across the nicely glassed porch and ran sticky fingers over the newel post in the hall; stout ladies peered interestedly into Mrs. Bebee's linen press, and challenged her taste in hangings for the dining-room and offered information as to what they would hang there instead. A drawn look began to appear on the faces of the Bebees.

In the beginning Mrs. Bebee had said: "I'm not going to do any spring cleaning; we'll be leaving so soon—what's the use?" But as prying eyes demanded uncovering of her housekeeping, pride swelled within her, and she turned the house topsy-turvy on

"Is that so? Well, if they do take it, Andrew, I'm not going to leave the built-in bookcases, no, nor my cedar chest nor—"

He sat up. "Now look here! It's you that've been wanting to get away. When you sell a house complete, you sell it complete. You can't go yanking out built-in things. I heard you tell her myself you were going to leave everything just exactly as is."

"You said after that garage couple you were going to take shoots from all the shrubs and all of the ramblers and—"

"That's entirely different! Anyhow I've decided not to—that is, if the Farneys buy."

"As if that chit of a girl would notice!"

"It's the principle!" said Mr. Bebee righteously. "And she's a noticing little thing. You can tell she's been used to the best."

"I've no doubt her father spoils her terribly. But that's no reason everyone else should."

"What are you getting so excited about?" Mr. Bebee demanded in a trembling voice. "If you don't want to sell, say so. I'm only trying to please you."

"Humph!" sighed Mrs. Bebee darkly. She changed the subject, feeling that she had had the last word. "Did he say anything about the price?"

"Asked me what I wanted for the place and when I told him, didn't bat an eye. But he'll try to bargain. He looks like a pretty slick customer to me."

Mrs. Bebee spoke slowly and judiciously. "He looks to me," she ruminated, "like a very practical business man. I think," she added, "he could be handled." She had tried to work what she called her "woman's intuition" into Mr. Bebee's business for thirteen years.

"Oh, well,"—Mr. Bebee picked up his paper,—*"they wont buy. Just looking, like the rest of the bunch."*

BUT as Mrs. Bebee pointed out, Mr. Bebee was wrong as usual. The Farneys gave every indication of buying. The girl came again next day, fluttering here and there, and telling how much she adored housekeeping for Daddy; he let her do exactly as she pleased, and were servants hard to get in the suburbs? Her radio would go there between the windows, and it was a gorgeous room for dancing, wasn't it? Kick back the rugs and there you were!

Mrs. Bebee cast commiserating eyes over her unscratched floor. Farney came again on Wednesday evening with Fleeta, admitted jocosely that if the little girl liked the house, all right. Made no difference to him where he lived, so long as he had a corner somewhere to run to when the young folks cut up too much.

"He's really just pathetic," said Mrs. Bebee later to her husband. "That girl doesn't give him a minute's peace. He ought to have a woman to look after him."

"Oh, I expect he gets along. Must be nice to have young people in and out." It struck Mr. Bebee suddenly that California was a long, long way off; queer how one met people only to lose track of them right away.

Farney proved to be the "slick customer" Mr. Bebee had predicted. Farney didn't seem able to count over seventeen thousand, and when Mr. Bebee mentioned twenty thousand dollars as the price of the house, Farney would get a far-away look in his eyes and gaze upon the householder as though he were speaking Esperanto.

It was very, very aggravating to Mr. Bebee.

The Necktie bustled over importantly. "Now, can't you and Mr. Farney get together?" he wanted to know. "I told you you'd have to compromise, sir. He's reasonable. You must be too."

"I am reasonable," quoth Mr. Bebee patiently. "Twenty thousand's my price or nothing."

The Necktie managed to preserve its charm. "Oh, come now. If he will agree to give—I'm sure I can make him give—say—"

"Twenty thousand!" interposed the house owner. "And I don't give a whoop whether I sell or not." The Necktie went sadly away. Mrs. Bebee compressed her lips. What could you do with a man like that?

IT was on a Tuesday, a particularly warmish Tuesday with a dash of drizzle in the air, that Mr. Bebee ran into Fleeta very unexpectedly on the avenue.

"Oh, I'm just going in here to tea," Fleeta informed him. "All alone," she added after a moment.

Mr. Bebee could never tell afterward exactly how it happened. He found himself sitting across from her in one of those queer little tea-rooms, hitherto unexplored by him, with waitresses cosmopolitan in Russian red, and extraordinarily gay hieroglyph-

ics, which were Egyptian funeral designs, covering the walls. Fleeta was gurgling: "Oh, I just love this place. It's so nice and bohemian, isn't it?" Mr. Bebee was feeling quite abandoned and bohemian before he realized it.

"Daddy and I have the tea habit," Fleeta explained, happily. "He must be waiting for me this minute at our regular State Street entrance." She laughed as she thought of her patient parent, and Mr. Bebee felt deeply content. "He'll get tired after a bit and go on. I often change my mind. Anyhow," said Fleeta confidentially, "it's much more exciting having tea with a married man than with one's own father."

Something lit inside Mr. Bebee. He settled his collar.

SHE blew smoke outrageously through the slim fingers that held her cigarette, and chaffed Mr. Bebee as he had not been chaffed for thirteen years. He put it down to the "tea habit," and wondered why he had not cultivated it long ago.

"I do wish you and Daddy would settle all this old business about the house," the darling child pouted prettily. "I'm in a hurry to get moved in. And what do you think? I'm going to plant the garden *all myself*."

Mr. Bebee made indeterminate noises of wonder and admiration. He was on the point of recommending an excellent fertilizer, but checked himself.

"When *will* everything be settled?" the girl persisted.

"Oh, soon, soon," Mr. Bebee assured her. "You're so anxious, guess we'll have to settle in no time now."

"It's about the price, isn't it?" she wanted to know innocently. "I don't understand a thing about horrid old business, but I don't see why you should mind letting us have it for a weeny bit less. Why *do* you?" For the life of him Mr. Bebee couldn't think of a reason.

"Daddy," she continued sadly, "had some bad luck last year. And I guess I cost him a lot."

"Well, he shouldn't mind that!" said Mr. Bebee feelingly. A strange tenderness flooded him. "Your daddy ought to give you everything in the world you want. I would!" And he added hurriedly: "If you were my daughter, I mean."

"Oh, you're not anywhere *near* old enough to have a daughter as old as I am," she said, prettily. Mr. Bebee observed suddenly her lips were like his rambler. He tore his eyes away from them. "And Daddy," said Fleeta, "does give me everything I want. That's why he feels so bad about the house. He knows I want it so!" Her chin trembled. "Oh, Mr. Bebee, I'd just love to live where you have. Somehow you've taken old bricks and mortar and made a *home*!" She paused. "Why, it would simply break my heart if I couldn't live there." She turned her eyes full upon the perspiring gentleman across from her. He laid down his toast convulsively.

"Oh, come, you mustn't feel that bad," said Mr. Bebee. "How much does your daddy think he can pay?"

She flicked her rambler lips with a handkerchief. "I heard him say he simply couldn't afford a cent over seventeen thousand," she said wearily. "You know, I've just spent my life in hotels. I've always wanted a real home."

Mr. Bebee had never felt so low in his life. Poor kid, trying her best to have a little nest of her own, and here he was keeping her from it! His face grew pinker as he spoke. "I'll tell you," said Mr. Bebee, making an immense decision, "we'll have a little secret. The next time your father offers me seventeen, I'll take it."

He felt expansive, as if he had given a check to the Salvation Army or something, and gentle and very, very paternal as he paid for the tea, and when Fleeta smiled at him out on the drizzly avenue and slipped her hand into his for "Good-by," that same strange softness stole over him he had felt first at the table. "You're just sweet," said the Fleeta child gravely, and Mr. Bebee handed her into her cab with cymbals clanging within him.

HE went back to his office, ruminating on the way age must ever make way for youth even in its own house, and telling himself he was glad to get the blamed thing settled, and wondering if it would be possible to keep the price a secret from Mrs. Bebee and knowing quite well it would not be. Well, it was his place, wasn't it, bought with his money? And hadn't she been dinging it into him to take less and get away sooner? He mentally composed speeches of defense all the way home an hour later.

Mrs. Bebee met him at the door, presenting the usual hurried cheek for his home-coming kiss, and stood by him electrically as he took off his damp coat. He (Continued on page 164)



The Armoire

WHEN Cora Saverey boarded that touring ship at Marseilles she had no idea of the emotional maelstrom she was to generate in the soul of Captain Musker. But William McFee, the author, knows, for hasn't he spent years on that course from Gibraltar to Haifa and back again observing pretty women and captains?

"You're a fast worker, Captain," she informed him. "Do you always go for a girl like this?"

By William McFee Illustrated by Dudley Gloyne Summers

IT used to be said by the Company's prize cynic, Purser Jaques of the *Aramaya*, that Captain Musker got and kept the *Biskra* because he and his ship were so much alike. The *Biskra* was middle-aged, but she did not look it. She was peculiar in some of her habits. She ran down smaller craft that couldn't see her coming in thick weather. She had a motion of her own, smooth yet with a final jerk just at the end of the roll that sent everything on the tables flying. She made women sick and sorry if the weather was against her. In fine weather she was so pleasant that passengers forgot they were at sea. And finally, she had a number of undetected defects in her construction.

Of course Jaques had sailed with Musker and was no friend of his. No purser who had sailed with Musker was his friend, even supposing that pursers have friends—which is denied by many executive and commanding officers on ships. It may be, therefore, that Jaques pushed the cynical comparison a little too far. Captain Musker took care of the *Biskra*; and the *Biskra*, running pretty full all the time, was taking care of Captain Musker. As Musker's chief engineer had remarked to the superintendent, when asked how he got on with the Captain: "I don't get on with him. I keep out of his way. I don't like him.

I am not hired to fall in love with skippers. But if I was an owner, that frozen-faced conundrum up there on the bridge is the man I would put in charge of my ship."

You see how difficult is the pursuit of truth among those familiar with the facts. Captain Musker was not a frozen-faced conundrum. He had severe features, resembling those of clever and sensual ecclesiastics in old pictures. He did not smile very much, it must be admitted. He had a habit of letting the other man talk himself out—and then maintaining an unembarrassed silence. This was the peculiarity which led the chief, who was full of forceful language himself, to call the old man a conundrum. He might as well have called him a hypocrite because he read prayers in a skeptical tone of voice, as though he were not bigoted about it, in the saloon on Sundays. If the chief was not hired to fall in love with the skipper, Captain Musker was aware of no instructions to the effect that he reveal his inmost thoughts to anybody.

As for Captain Musker's attitude toward women, that requires a certain amount of detailed description. Indeed, this attitude of Captain Musker, and the predicament in which it landed him, is the story. He was far from illiterate, but he was one

of the most unlitery of men. Yet even he, looking back over the events when he was once more at sea, was wont to mutter (to himself) that it would make a story. He didn't even mutter about it to others!

Far from illiterate! Captain Musker was typical of a certain class of shipmaster, in that he had a lot of unexpected and unexpurgated opinions and experience of life. Although the chief would have denied it, having no information on the subject, Captain Musker was anything but inarticulate, either. He even knew enough French to be rude in that language. In those now far distant days, when he was a bullied and muted second mate of an ancient iron sailing ship out of London, with a Welsh skipper, a Scotch mate, a Belgian boatswain and a crowd of Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, Dutchmen, Greeks and Maltese, not one of whom was a sailor, Captain Musker had read a great number of books. He had a memory of extraordinary retentiveness, as pursers and chief engineers knew to their cost. Phrases and words remained in his memory forever. And he had a remarkable sense of hearing. He had once taken the *Biskra* into Southampton in a fog, by hearing alone, but that has nothing to do with the present story. He had a remarkable sense of hearing when conversing with people. He was aware of the finest shades of enunciation and accent. He classified people in his mind by the sounds of their voices and the way they pronounced some trivial phrase. He had a perfectly maddening trick of repeating that phrase to them, copying their manner and exaggerating it, by a mere fraction of a tone, into a caricature.

On the other hand, Captain Musker apparently had only the vaguest notion of what people looked like. Not that he was blind, by a long shot. But it was frequently remarked by passengers that he seemed to recall their faces, even an hour or so after conversing with them, with difficulty. He would greet them courteously but without allusion to bygone pleasantries. By this method Captain Musker remained on amicable terms with his patrons, yet he rendered them quite incapable of presuming upon his good nature. He could pass people without a word, as though they were a part of the *Biskra's* top-hamper. Anyone who thought he, or she, was getting past the Captain's outer defenses, was speedily disillusioned.

To the uninitiated, these characteristics made him interesting without any assignable reason. He made them wonder what there was in him, anyway. When the voyage ended, they recalled him with respect and approval, and then forgot him. The *Biskra* filled up again with Americans eager to see the Mediterranean, and once more Captain Musker played his careful, skillful and enigmatic game. One might almost have suspected him of looking for some one.

He was. Captain Musker was an emotional buccaneer. He was one of those sharply intelligent and vital men whose profession as seaman, and destiny as husband and father, had neither satisfied nor disciplined his heart. He had never betrayed his secret to a living soul; but the fact remained that he was bored by the triviality of his existence. Even during the heavy responsibility of bringing the *Biskra* into New York through the infuriating ice and fogs of the winter months, the knowledge that he would be held even for the foolish negligence of others, if he had a smash, was inadequate to occupy his mind to the exclusion of romantic and villainous desires. Captain Musker had not shirked his duties in this life. His wife, a pale, worn, close-lipped Lancashire woman, received two-thirds of his pay each month from the owners in Liverpool, and she was raising her five children with exemplary North Country austerity and rectitude. Anything more wildly contrasting with Captain Musker's life of official splendor as commander of the *Biskra*, a twelve-thousand-ton pleasure ship, than the narrow house at Sefton Park, which is to Liverpool what Yonkers is to New York, could not be imagined. But Captain Musker was not often able to make this comparison. The *Biskra* went to Southampton on the rare occasions on which she docked in Great Britain. Most of her time her home port was New York. This was not distasteful to Captain Musker. He simply could not endure the atmosphere of Sefton Park. He had no intention of abandoning his wife and family in the ordinary sense of the word, but spiritually he had cast them off long ago. It was, to his secret soul, a shocking thing that he should be so shackled, and he had broken the shackles. He roamed the oceans unencumbered by the conventional inhibitions of respectability. His wife had never been on a sea-voyage, and she was not only unaware of her husband's way of life—she could not even imagine it. The infidelity of



sailor-men was, to her, something abstract and strange. She never associated her husband with such divagations. And in a general way Mrs. Musker showed sense. Captain Musker had no intention of quitting domestic life to live the shabby existence of the average jack-ashore prowler. Far from it.

He was looking for something better and finer, you may say. What did he seek? Because, it was a thing more than a person. To describe it more closely still, it was an embodied abstraction he sought. There were qualities about some women which stimulated his imagination and gave him fugitive glimpses of the fundamental principles of human happiness. It was not so easy to fill this specification as some lady passengers fancied. Their response to his first, almost imperceptible suggestion that sympathy was the indispensable factor in human friendship, often inspired him with a silent, invisible but none the less ferocious contempt. If Captain Musker had lived two centuries earlier, he would have made them walk the plank. Some, so crude was their conception of what he was driving at, he would probably have hanged at the yardarm.

But modern seamen who voyage out upon the more or less uncharted seas of romantic friendship are generally wrecked; or at any rate, they abandon the voyage and return home overland. Captain Musker was always making mistakes. It was a poor substitute for cutting their throats to cut them on the promenade deck. But he made the more intelligent of them feel acutely that they were not his ideal, after all.



She turned on him like a flash. "I wont have you imitating me!" she exclaimed. "I wont have it!"

It must not be supposed that these emotional cruises of Captain Musker were lost upon the officers of the *Biskra*. On the contrary, they were well known to them all, through the steward and purser. Occasionally the officer on the bridge had endeavored to discover just what Captain Musker was doing in his room. These efforts were disappointing. One inquisitive third mate had once tiptoed into the chart-room and was applying his bright blue eye to the keyhole of the Captain's cabin, when the door flew open sharply, allowing the young gentleman to fall in an apologetic pose at his commander's feet. Captain Musker did not say a word. He merely handed the third mate a sheet of paper bearing the heading "*Night Orders*," and in pencil underneath the following words: "*Come in whenever you wish, but don't spy on me, or anybody else.*" The young fellow never forgot the expression of blended astonishment and demoniacal delight on the face of the handsome French actress in extreme

Parisian décolleté, seated across the room holding a crème-de-menthe in her jeweled hand, nor her shrill cackling laughter. What he should have remembered in the first place was Captain Musker's acute sense of hearing.

But the purser and the steward had no such illusions, even had they felt like losing their own dignity of office. They were amused at the cool imperturbable insolence with which Captain Musker bundled semi-important people from his own particular table in the saloon and had interesting women brought over from corner tables where the purser himself or the doctor had stowed them for their own delectation. They were compelled to admire Captain Musker's manner. If he were carrying some one of absolutely first rank, such as the prime minister of Sarmatia or the financial adviser to the Governor of the Chersonese Peninsula, Captain Musker managed, by some occult variation of the ordinary rules of conversation, to make these potentates see how

much more desirable it was for them to have a special table, or even to take their meals in their suites. Old and important ladies, foisted on the Captain by the management, were not disturbed. Captain Musker simply dined in his cabin, and the ladies he preferred were usually delighted to accept his invitations.

Indeed, there was no particular reason for Captain Musker going downstairs at all. The owners of the *Biskra* left such points of etiquette entirely to their individual commanders. In their view, if a woman wanted to compromise herself on the high seas, it was no part of their duty or privilege to prevent her. It was possible—and cynical Purser Jaques had once remarked that it seemed certain—that some of them took sea-voyages for that express purpose. The Company put complaints down to jealousy, and in this they were generally right.

ON the voyage with which this story has to deal there had been an almost unbelievable dearth of what the doctor called "heart-interest." It is highly unusual for a ship to leave New York on a cruise to the Mediterranean without carrying a few of the sort of women Captain Musker suspected of possessing that elusive and subtle quality he delighted to discover. American women are extraordinarily sensitive to the appeal of life on board ship. They are also inclined to attribute heroic qualities to the men who command ships. But mere roguishness and bright interest in himself was not precisely what Captain Musker coveted. That sort of thing bored him. So did other men's lady-loves traveling alone, who attempted to achieve spurious flirtations with the Captain in order to excite the interest of some attractive vice-president of a million-dollar corporation whose wife was keeping to her cabin all the voyage. So did the rangy and athletic provincial women who taught English in distant colleges, making their first voyage to Europe, and who were ready to expire emotionally at the sight of Captain Musker's austere, appraising eyes bent upon them from beneath his peaked cap trimmed with golden oak-leaves.

But nothing else was to be found on this occasion. The Captain dined in taciturn dignity surrounded by respectable couples of normal wealth, age and social importance. He walked the promenade in solitary state, ignoring the expectant eyes of women in the ranked deck-chairs. He spent long hours in his room, reading or meditating upon the prospects of something turning up in Marseilles. He was not sanguine. The most likely arrivals were a host of students who had been dissipating in Paris and having an extra week or two in the Louvre.

The new purser of the *Biskra* was not cynical. Indeed, he was inclined to doubt the stories he had heard about Captain Musker in the past. He alluded to the Captain's monastic seclusion to the chief steward, who laid a long, cigarette-stained finger to his pink, fleshy nose. The steward's name was Drinkwater; but as he himself remarked at times, a man doesn't select his own name.

"You wait," he told the purser, Mr. Vokes, in a rich port-wine voice. "He's only biding his time. The old man's fancy in skirts aint yours, nor it aint mine, neither. But I'll say this for him—he goes in for thoroughbreds mostly, and he's damn' particular even about them."

"I haven't the slightest idea what you're talking about," said Vokes in a refined, querulous tone, "and I doubt if you have either, Drinkwater."

"Oh, all right, all right," mumbled the steward. "You haven't sailed with this old man. I have. You didn't see that Eye-Italian moving-picture actress in New York, did you? The Signorina Carmelita Something-or-other. She joined us in Naples. Some girl, Mr. Vokes."

"I saw her pictures in the Sunday papers," said Vokes, yawning. "What about her? Did he—"

"Not by a jugful!" returned Mr. Drinkwater, nodding solemnly. "She was at his table, and anybody with eyes in his head could see she was balmy about him."

"Why on earth should a woman like that get balmy, as you call it, about the skipper?" demanded Vokes irritably. "I heard the same sort of blah on the *Bizerta*. Marvelous tales of the celebrated Captain Musker! Must have a hypnotic eye!" He raised his voice. Mr. Drinkwater made a gesture of warning.

"He has a damn' inconvenient sense of hearing," he muttered, "and don't you forget it. I don't know why," he went on, alluding to the Italian lady. "I'm only telling you. He turned her down, cold! You know, he'll take people off. She had a way of saying, 'Oh, si, si' meaning 'Yes, yes,' you understand. He'd take her off."

Vokes stared as though he doubted the steward's sanity. Mr. Drinkwater nodded.

"Yes," he insisted. "Took her off, before the other passengers—'Oh, si, si!'" Mr. Drinkwater's voice became an astonishing falsetto.

"You mean, insulted her?" exclaimed Vokes, who suddenly looked extremely shocked. Like most commonplace men, Vokes could not bear the thought of a pretty woman being treated as though she were an ordinary human creature. He called it chivalry, doubting in his heart whether other men really understood it.

Mr. Drinkwater shook his head, his mouth pursed up, his eyes globular with superior information.

"He has a way with him," he said. "You wait. He's had nobody here to bother him so far this trip, you know."

The purser was not listening. It had come into his head that Captain Musker had been acting in this fashion only the day before. Vokes had been in the old man's room with some papers. He had given, as he stood beside Captain Musker's desk, his own peculiar slight cough, behind a bent forefinger. He became rigid with indignation now, as he realized what the Captain had done. He had taken him off! Had given a slight cough behind a curved forefinger!

Mr. Vokes became aware again of the steward talking. He frowned. His complacency was shattered like a shivered mirror, fresh cracks revealing themselves even as he eagerly scrutinized it. He came abruptly to the inevitable conclusion of the Englishman who has been taken off. Captain Musker was a bounder! A rank outsider!

"... The chief says we'll be in Marseilles tomorrow evening," concluded Mr. Drinkwater, who had been going on with his narration unconscious of the purser's thoughts.

Captain Musker did not happen to hear this conversation. Even he could not catch the sound of men's voices through four steel decks and several bulkheads, with the engines turning ninety revolutions per minute. It would have affected him not at all, however. Men received from him adequate justice, no matter how long they remained with him; they got nothing more. Captain Musker, when he wrote a reference for one of his officers, concluding with the conventional declaration of sorrow over the departure, would point it out to the young man with the blunt end of his fountain pen. Nothing more. The departing mate would comprehend perfectly. He would always allude to his late commander with an expressive grimace. He learned in time that Captain Musker had his good points. For instance, he had never sent in "confidential reports" about anybody in his life. He didn't even answer the Company's letters asking for them. If they wanted a snooper, they could hire one at less than a shipmaster's salary. Mr. Vokes was young and full of his English dignity, and he did not yet understand that power is heady stuff, but a good commander carries it according to his own particular temperament. It had never struck Mr. Vokes in exactly this light—but acting as an unpaid judge of one's superiors is the most unprofitable profession in the world.

THE *Biskra* was to remain merely overnight in Marseilles in the Grand Bassin du Lazaret. Mr. Vokes was in his office in the grand entrance hall when the gangway was shot on board and the new passengers, who had been waiting since four o'clock—it was now six-thirty—began to embark. He saw Drinkwater answer the ship's telephone in his office across the hall, and then he forgot everything because he found himself gazing straight into Cora Saverey's eyes, through the shining brass bars of the grille. Mr. Vokes did not so much fall in love with Cora Saverey as to indulge in a head-on collision with that particular kind of grand passion which seems to afflict ship's officers on passenger vessels. He was dimly aware of Drinkwater, the officious fool, coming away from the telephone and walking rapidly to and fro, his hands behind his back, with the smile of a minor prophet whose predictions have come true, on his flushed and bibulous countenance.

Mr. Drinkwater was hovering in the vicinity for three excellent reasons: First, it was his duty to do so, while the passengers were coming on board; second, he wished to speak to Mrs. Saverey about her seat in the saloon; and finally, after the fashion of minor prophets, he was eager to impart his latest confirmation to an unbeliever.

Vokes overlooked this side of the question. To him the upper part of Cora Saverey's fine figure, the dark luster of her brown eyes, the exquisitely flexible beauty of her mouth, were sufficient to exclude the world beyond. He (Continued on page 102)

Hearty delicious Vegetable Soup for the one hot dish of the meal!



32
different ingredients

Summer, with all its cold meats, salads and iced beverages! How welcome and how stimulating it is, both to your appetite and your digestion, to include also a hot dish in the meal!

An ideal choice is Campbell's Vegetable Soup—the main luncheon and supper dish in millions of homes. It's splendidly hearty and substantial; yet tempting to the warm weather appetite, which often needs coaxing.

Are you frequently puzzled, as so many are, to know what to provide for the children these warm days? They eat Campbell's Vegetable Soup eagerly—it is both filling and beneficial.

And it's so convenient!

12 cents a can

CAMPBELL'S
SOUPS

thought her ruby-red tam-o'-shanter the most vividly suitable and smartly *chic* affair in the world. Vokes was shaken. He could hardly answer her inquiries as to mail, hour of sailing, baggage, cabin, bath, deck-chair, money-changing, library and games, which every woman deems it her duty to discuss with the purser within five minutes of embarking. He was shaken. Peering at him through the grille, Cora thought lightly of some strange uniformed animal in a marine zoo. She was always nice to men in official positions while traveling. It was good policy. She smiled at Mr. Vokes, and he trembled.

Then he saw Drinkwater beaming and waiting to speak to her the moment she turned away from the grille. He wished Drinkwater would go away and fall down the boiler-room ladder so that he would be temporarily disabled. He wished that the whole business of embarkation could be halted for several hours so that he could continue to look into Cora Saverey's eyes. But apparently as a purser he continued to function during this momentary vertigo. He heard himself speaking and he saw Cora Saverey smile again and murmur, "Thank you so much," as she turned to fall into the clutches of the unspeakable Drinkwater.

FIVE minutes later the chief steward came into Mr. Vokes' office and spoke behind his pink, hairy fist.

"Just as I said, Mr. Vokes," he rumbled. "You saw that skirt with the red tam-o'-shanter? Mrs. Saverey? Old man was looking down from the bridge and spots her. Telephones me, you noticed, perhaps. 'Steward,' he says, 'that lady as has just come aboard, in the red hat. Put her at my table next to me,' he says. Didn't I tell you he would come to life when we got to Marseilles? Nice piece of goods, too, if you ask me. 'And tell the purser,' he says, 'tell the purser to bring the passenger-list at once,' he says. It's her he wants to know about, I may as well tell you," added Drinkwater. "Age, nationality, married or single, name and address. He'll get her telephone-number from her himself," he went on with a giggle.

It is only just to state that the steward had no idea, never did have any idea, of the anguish all this was causing Mr. Vokes. Drinkwater did not know what had happened while he was waiting for Mrs. Saverey to be at liberty. As for a purser falling in love, most of them were too hard-boiled to make such an event probable. Drinkwater was merely interested in proving that he had been correct in his diagnosis of Captain Musker's technique.

"I tell you," he murmured, moving off again, "he's a wonder."

It might easily be true, thought Vokes miserably, as he went on with his work. There were other passengers, a dozen of them, besides Mrs. Saverey, and he went on with his work. For five minutes Vokes had soared into the empyrean. All his life he had been selfish, but had regarded it as a compound of virtue and refinement. But for five minutes—the minutes between Cora Saverey's smile and Drinkwater's information—Mr. Vokes had formulated a scheme for getting this ravishing woman at his table, inviting her this evening to dine with him, in one of the places he knew in the *Cannegièr*. In a series of rapid and cinematographic visions he saw himself with her at Bertolini's at Naples, at Shepherd's at Cairo, at the Salvatorelli at Tunis. He saw himself on the little balcony of the Royal Danielli at Venice, envied by all the other men in the place, and entering a gondola for a moonlight ride on the canals. Vokes had never had any romance in his life, and he had often pitied himself. He imagined romance was a combination of luck and being an Englishman. He was mistaken. Romance is

a matter of temperament and opportunity. The poignant moments of ecstasy passed; the flame went out, and Vokes regarded the smoking residue with dismal discouragement. Years later Vokes achieved his romance—on another steamer. He was one of those men who marry their romance and never achieve another.

CAPTAIN MUSKER studied the situation. There had been something about the glimpse he had had of that woman as she hastened up the gangway, a glimpse mainly of a red tam-o'-shanter, fine shoulders and a flicker of silk stockings above gleaming high heels, which inspired him to hope that his season of boredom was at an end. He could not have explained it, but something in the way she came on board led him to believe that she was not only a competent traveler but that she was alone. Quite accidentally he had been leaning on the rail outside his cabin abaft the bridge after "ringing off" to the engine-room. He had caught sight of the red tam and the poise of her body as she turned round from speaking to some one on the dock—an official, he was sure—and swung forward up the gangway. It seemed extraordinary that so fugitive an impression could give him so strong a conviction that she was interesting and unencumbered by bothersome preoccupations. He stepped at once into his quarters and called up the chief steward, listening intently for the tone in which that gentleman replied. Oh, yes, the port-wine voice said with husky deference, the lady was now at the purser's office. It would be attended to at once. Quite so.

Captain Musker told himself, as he hung up, that Drinkwater had had a few whiskies already. He could almost smell that rich vinous breath over the wire! Captain Musker was very abstemious himself. He had a notion that liquor rather detracted from the sport to which he was addicted—the search for a congenial feminine personality. One had need of all one's brains to maintain an advantage over women, he believed. And it is true that men like him, with their senses extraordinarily acute, and endowed with an undiminished vitality of body and mind, are not attracted by the muggy delights of alcohol.

Nor did he notice anything in the manner of Vokes, who appeared with some papers in due course. He was not thinking of Vokes. He had decided before they left New York that Vokes was well enough, somewhat conceited, and by no means observant. All of this was correct. When Vokes arrived, Captain Musker was having a shave and a change before dinner. He had been up early, passing the Spanish headlands. He ignored Vokes, telling him to leave the stuff on the desk. At seven-thirty, when he judged a woman like this Mrs. Saverey—Cora Huntington Saverey, according to the passenger-list—would be halfway through her fish, Captain Musker stepped into the elevator and descended to the dining-room.

BUT Cora Saverey was more anxious to meet Captain Musker and make a favorable impression upon him than he was to meet her and exercise his celebrated influence. She always, in her frequent voyages to Europe, had this plan in view, merely as a matter of sound policy. It did not always amount to much, because on the big western ocean flyers, the captain was often invisible to a mere lone Thirty-eighth Street dressmaker.

On this occasion, however, Cora had come to Marseilles from Paris instead of going direct to Cherbourg. She was eager to see the storied lands of the Mediterranean. The tourist agent in Paris had told her she could pick up the *Biskra* at Marseilles—a number of passengers were going overland to Switzerland and Germany—and make the trip.

She inquired about baggage. She had a large quantity of baggage, as usual, trunks and trunks of dresses which must go direct, of course; but other trunks, materials, patterns, bric-a-brac for the *atelier* she wished to take with her. There was also some furniture, antiques, also for the *atelier*.

The agent assured her the *Biskra* had room for a truckload of baggage, if she wished to pay the freight on it. He had leaned far over the counter to show her the exact location of her room on the *Biskra* as they examined the accommodation-chart. He had been quite nice. Men were generally nice to Cora. Her husband was the solitary exception. He did not understand her. It was very difficult for Cora to explain her husband to other men, especially men who fiercely insisted she divorce him and marry them instead. She was thinking of this difficulty—it was strange how much she thought of him—when Captain Musker came to take his seat beside her in the saloon of the *Biskra*.

But if her husband was a puzzle to her, Cora Saverey found Captain Musker even more baffling. She knew she was attractive in her rust-colored evening gown with a red amber necklace and a carbuncle bracelet on her splendid arm. So attired, her beauty was of the robust, yet not too heavy type, which makes men meditate upon the days when women were carried off amid scenes of slaughter and barbaric ravishment.

But Captain Musker, searching her face in a first glance of grand appraisal, was preoccupied more with the quick intelligence and honest comradeship he detected latent there. This, he felt, was she whom he had imagined so often of late. He plunged at once into conversation in an undertone, and people at neighboring tables, noting the expression of Cora Saverey's face change from smiling politeness to a sort of bewildered yet intense interest, wondered what he was saying.

They were fated, however, to remain in ignorance. Women never repeated the things Captain Musker told them. As Drinkwater phrased it, he had a way with them. Cora Saverey seemed so utterly engrossed with his words she hardly noticed what she was eating. The others at the Captain's table, a rotund and good-natured couple, addressed remarks to him from time to time and received adequate replies. And the fascinating monologue continued in a low tone, running round the interruptions as a stream runs round the obstructions in its course. Sometimes, restraining her laughter with difficulty, Cora shook her head. Laughing outright, she would nod her vigorous assent. Once she turned her head away from Captain Musker, who continued to talk, and hiding her face in her hand, shook with shocked merriment. And Mr. Vokes, who was sitting in full view of this scene, became more convinced than ever of Captain Musker's ungentelemanly behavior. It stabbed him through and through to think that the Captain might even be taking off himself in order to evoke that unseemly laughter in a charming but misguided girl.

It was all the more impressive from a spectator's point of view because Captain Musker's austere features remained unsmiling. The middle-aged and elderly passengers did not approve. They felt certain that to make a woman like Cora Saverey—extremely smart and yet entirely unplaced as yet—enjoy herself at such short notice, there must be something improper about the conversation. And naturally they longed to hear it.

But Cora did not enlighten them. As she left the saloon, she nodded to a couple of spinsters with whom she had chatted on the way from Paris, and went to her cabin smiling, leaving the commander looking into a demi-tasse. Cora had accepted his invitation to go on shore with him in an hour.

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IN THE FASHIONABLE SUMMER COLONIES AT NEWPORT AND BAR HARBOR

*169 women tell why they find
this soap best for their skin ~*



YACHTING, SAILING, BATHING-PARTIES—ALL THE LAZY, LUXURIOUS PAGEANT OF A NEWPORT SEASON

THE Italian ambassador arrives. Dinners, dances, bathing-parties . . . The Brazilian envoy arrives. A lawn-fête, a polo-match, in honor of a distinguished Russian prince . . . Tennis week. The Horse Show. A wedding of international interest. Yachting, sailing, golf on the Ocean Links . . . the Newport season!

Far more picturesque, more in-

souciant, than in winter—society, at its two favorite summer resorts, Newport and Bar Harbor, becomes like a wonderful cubist pattern, all dazzling movement and color.

Never were the women as beautiful as now—like tropical flowers in their brilliant sports frocks; their cheeks touched to carnation by sun and wind, arms and throats delicately sun-browned.

WE asked 193 women of the cottage colonies at Newport and Bar Harbor what soap they find best for the care of their skin.

More than three-fourths answered, "Woodbury's Facial Soap!"

"It keeps my skin in beautiful condition," they said—"Protects it from salt water."—"The tonic effect of Woodbury's Soap is delightful, especially used with ice as an after treatment."—"Has greatly improved the texture of my skin."

A skin specialist worked out the formula by which Woodbury's Facial Soap is made. This formula not only calls for the purest and finest

ingredients; it also demands greater refinement in the manufacturing process than is commercially possible with ordinary toilet soap.

A 25-cent cake of Woodbury's lasts a month or six weeks. Around each cake is wrapped a booklet of famous skin treatments for overcoming common skin defects.

Within a week or ten days after beginning to use Woodbury's, you will notice an improvement in your complexion. Get a cake today—begin tonight the treatment your skin needs.

Your WOODBURY TREATMENT for ten days

NOW—THE NEW LARGE-SIZE TRIAL SET

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For the enclosed 10c please send me the new large-size trial cake of Woodbury's Facial Soap, the Cold Cream, Facial Cream and Powder, and the treatment booklet, "A Skin You Love to Touch."

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More than three-fourths of these beautiful women said, "Woodbury's"

CORA SAVEREY was a business woman. Her atelier in Thirty-eighth Street, where she also had an apartment, was one of those small select enterprises which succeed by means of the oldest and most economical form of advertising in the world—personal recommendation. She had a clientele that included Forty-second Street vocalists, Park Avenue flappers, handsome ladies with apartments in the Thirties near the Third Avenue L, who were sometimes accompanied by middle-aged Wall Street men; and not-yet-successful motion-picture actresses working in the studios beyond the Fifty-ninth Street bridge. Not a married woman in the lot, Cora used to think, with a smile. It was strange how the waifs and strays of New York's Alsatia seemed to like her, who was devoted to her husband in a most absurd way. Or rather it was strange that she should have developed a vogue for them. She dressed with amazing *chic* herself; but her style was decidedly Frenchy, and it came natural to her to be simple, yet vivid and smart.

And of course Cora was in continual conflict with the passing fancies of men, who saw in her one of her own customers, one of those maturing and experienced girls, perhaps, who are forever tearing to and fro across the Atlantic, or perhaps a rich man's companion about to be paid off. Cora was neither, but she never made a parade of her real feelings. She had her way to make. Men like these had other women-friends—possible clients. She was clever. And, as already remarked, the officers of the ships on which she traveled were the especial objects of her smiles and pretty speeches. She had never lost anything by it yet.

But as she pondered Captain Musker's recent disclosures regarding himself, she was puzzled to know what to make of him. Somehow or other Cora seemed to appeal most to those men who did not believe very strongly in female integrity. Virtuous and ambitious men were intimidated by her air of worldly hauteur when her eyes, the color of new bronze, rested upon them. They were also restrained by the intense bitterness with which their womenfolk spoke of her before they knew anything about her. It would not be true to say Cora knew all this. She did not know it as she knew the Customs dues on the materials she imported. She was aware of it as we are aware of some one behind us, as we sense a premonition. She did not, in her thoughts, accuse Captain Musker of being one of these men merely because he had spoken to her about himself with Homeric frankness. This was because Captain Musker, too, was

clever. You might almost say he had his way to make as well as she. He had a problem to solve, anyhow.

He was clever. Everything he had told her, while it could be taken as extravagant metaphor and merely expressive of his desire to amuse a passenger, might, after all, be true. It was possible that he had been seeking a soul-mate, a woman who could sympathize with his peculiar state of mind. It was possible that she herself had unique qualities for such a rôle, that Fate had brought them together, two minds with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one! It was even possible that he had fallen in love with her the moment he had seen her coming up the gangway. According to what he had told her, the voyage from that moment had become something entirely different. Instead of a dead dreariness of routine, it would now be an adventure, brilliant, scintillant, possibly incandescent—if she were the woman he believed her to be! It was the word *incandescent* which had caused her to turn her head and become convulsed with laughter.

IT was ridiculous, of course; yet, as she repaired her make-up in her cabin, she could not help thinking about him. She was not such a fool as not to see that the voyage would be delightful, if not "incandescent," if Captain Musker made her his companion. She decided he was fascinating. And a woman can love one man with an obstinate all-enduring devotion, and yet think of another man as fascinating, admiring him, and enjoying with a sort of virginal wickedness the perils of the intimacy. She can do this and keep her head, while the man, so long as he is not the victim of his own emotions, remains in exasperated ignorance of her real feeling for him. If he falls in love, the affair becomes a series of duels, in which he is likely to receive a mortal wound in his self-esteem.

The first rounds of Cora's duel with Captain Musker took place that evening over the table of a café-restaurant in the Rue Noailles, which is a continuation of the Cannebière. There were buttons on the foils, one may say. She was reluctant to spoil her chances for a charming voyage. He had his pride. Captain Musker was tremendously jealous of his self-esteem, of his judgment, and of his reputation for fastidiousness.

"I have been thinking of what you told me," she said, smiling. "It was awfully interesting."

"And you agree?" he asked, outwardly calm, but much more perturbed within than he believed possible. She stared at him for an instant and burst out laughing in his face. He thought: "*She is everything I like.*"

"Who do you think you are?" she demanded explosively. "The Prince of Wales? No, of course not!" And she laughed again, her eyes on his, accepting a cigarette, entralling him completely in the snare of her beauty.

And again he said to himself: "*Everything I like.*"

"No," he said aloud, "but you will."

"You're a fast worker, Captain," she informed him with a glance of generous admiration. "Do you always go for a girl like this?"

"I've never had cause to 'go' for anyone like this, as you call it, before. I don't take orders about speed. Don't you like it?"

"Oh, like it! That's—well, not the point. Don't you get rebuffs?" she inquired cheekily.

"Mind your own business," he growled. "I asked you a question."

She laughed and left her hand on the table. He took it. She gazed at him through the smoke of her cigarette.

"You do like it," he announced coolly. She drew her hand gently back.

"Does it mean so very much to you, Captain?" she asked.

"Why don't you stick to the point?" he insisted.

"I told you it wasn't the point," she flashed back at him.

"Then I was right. You like it! That makes it easier for me to tell you that it means very much indeed to me," he said, frowning.

"And all you told me, about your need of some one with sympathy, was serious?" she asked. He nodded vigorously. He was repeating to himself, "*Everything I like,*" but to her he said, with the very faintest tinge of mockery in his tones:

"Tell me about your life as a *moodeeste*, in your atelier. Aren't you lonely?"

She looked up at him sharply. She had used those two words, perhaps with a little swank, since she felt so glad to be with English-speaking people again. For an instant she faltered. And then she smiled, her chin in her hand, and reaching for another cigarette, she gave him a wistful enigmatic glance from the depths of her bronze-colored eyes.

"Well, perhaps, at times," she said.

"Why have you never married again?" he asked. There was a dangerous flicker in the eyes gazing at him for a moment.

"I might follow your example and say mind your own business," she remarked slowly; "but I can tell you why. I'm not sure I'd be any better off."

"Yes?" he said, wondering if this were a piece of daring on her part, offering him an almost unbelievable opening. Suddenly she leaned forward, her elbows on the little iron table, the glass of Cointreau raised to her lips.

"Don't ask too much, Captain," she said gently, "of a poor working girl."

The Captain did not reply. But to himself he repeated the glamorous phrase:

"*Everything I like!*"

AND a month later, as the *Biskra* started homeward toward Gibraltar and New York, the amphitheatres and cisterns of ancient Carthage away on her port beam, on the flank of Sidi Bon Said, Captain Musker was still of the same mind. She was not only all he had imagined, but more. In the moonlight of the crossings, amid the beauty of Posilipo and Sorrento, during the heat and dust and strangeness of such places as the Holy City and Damascus, in a fast motorcar between Cairo and Heliopolis, under the moon again between Athens and Phaleron Bay, the magical way she responded to his mood without abandoning her mystery made him revise, at times, his opinion of women. Here in Tunis, she had done it again. He knew very little more about her now than when she came on board at Marseilles. Not that she had been rudely uncommunicative. He had learned the sort of women who patronized her shop, the kind of books and plays she liked, and her fad for antique furniture—for the atelier. Here in Tunis she had made him go into strange old places looking for "pieces."

And she had detected, and denounced to his face, that habit of his of taking people off. He had done it more than once to her, and she had put her foot down.

"I won't have it!" she had said to his amazement. He recalled the scene and the bewilderment of the old Spaniard who had the thing for sale.

"What do you want with a great thing like that?" he had asked, amused, as she poked around the dark, dirty shop. It was a huge wardrobe of Spanish workmanship, of massive Honduras mahogany with handles Cora suspected to be cast silver. There was a coat of arms over the door, and, within,

"A Drama Unrehearsed"

Under that title there will shortly be published in this magazine as ingenious a tale of European high life in society and the theater as has appeared in a long, long time. In the grace and vividness of its writing, and in the ingenuity of its plot, it promises to be ranked very high among the really big stories of the year. Its author is that distinguished international novelist and journalist—

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

Mrs. Reginald Vanderbilt

says:

"... together they constitute as simple, swift and effectual a method of caring for the skin as has yet been discovered"

THE lovely younger women of society have learned that even in the proud bloom of youth it pays to keep the lamp of beauty filled and trimmed.

Listen, for instance, to Mrs. Vanderbilt:—"Youthfulness is the real pot of gold at the end of every woman's rainbow. How to keep it, how to achieve it is her goal."

Mrs. Vanderbilt's beauty is like a star—cool, white, apart. It is unexpected—and thrilling.

As Miss Gloria Morgan she "danced at court" in the great capitals of Europe. Then came her brilliant marriage into one of America's most celebrated families, followed by the birth of a lovely baby girl.

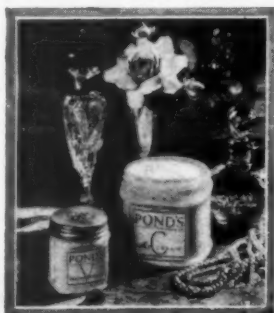
Marriage, motherhood, houses in New York and Newport—responsibilities have only increased Mrs. Vanderbilt's conviction that beauty must have wise care.

"Pond's Two Creams," she says, "are a wonderful help to this coveted end—they cleanse the skin, keeping it fresh and firm. And protect it, giving it a velvety finish. Together they constitute as simple, swift and effectual a method of caring for the skin as has yet been discovered."

Care for your skin as follows daily
Whenever your skin needs cleansing use Pond's Cold Cream. After you return from an outing and always at night before retiring, pat it generously over the surface of your face, throat, hands. Let it stay on a few moments that its soft fine oils may sink down, down into the



The shimmer of white taffeta, the daring of black velvet in this exquisite period Lanvin frock, conspire to brighten MRS. VANDERBILT'S exotic beauty



The TWO CREAMS which cleanse, tone and preserve your delicate skin

skin's deep cells, forcing out all dust, dirt and face powder. A soft cloth or facial tissue removes all cream and pore-deep dirt. To make doubly sure, pat fresh cream on again. Remove once more. Finish with a dash of cold water or a rub with ice.

If your skin has been exposed to sun and wind or if it tends to dryness, after the bedtime cleansing pat on more Pond's Cold Cream and leave it until morning. It smooths out all the unlovely little lines, brings

you supple and fresh to start the day.

Oiliness means overactive oil glands and these in turn mean congestion at the base of the pores. Repeated cleansings with Pond's will eliminate every trace of oiliness and bring back a soft, clear tone—like satin without the sheen.

After every cleansing with Pond's Cold Cream, except the bedtime one, apply Pond's Vanishing Cream thinly. It vanishes, leaving an exquisitely smooth surface, a translucent loveliness. And now for your powder. Whisk it on and see how beautifully it lies and lingers! You won't forever have to be daubing your nose in public. And go out, now, without apprehension

for your skin. Laugh at the wind. Turn your nose up at the sun. They cannot harm you—spared, protected, as you are by this delicate film of Pond's Vanishing Cream.

Buy and try Pond's Creams. See for yourself that Mrs. Vanderbilt speaks truly when she says, "They constitute as effectual a method of caring for the skin as has yet been discovered."

Other women of beauty and social prestige who have praised Pond's Creams are:

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN OF ROUMANIA
THE PRINCESSE MARIE DE BOURBON
THE DUCHESSE DE RICHELIEU
MRS. WILLIAM E. BORAH
MISS ANNE MORGAN
MRS. NICHOLAS LONGWORTH
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Free Offer: Why not try Pond's Two Creams, free? Mail coupon for tubes of each and instructions for using them.

The Pond's Extract Company, Dept. G
133 Hudson Street, New York City

Please send me your free tubes of Pond's Creams.

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it was as large as a small room. Captain Musker was taken aback by her answer.

"That's what I shall use it for, a room for the models," she said. "It is an *armoire*."

"Oh, I see; it's an *armoire*," he had mocked, and she had turned on him like a flash.

"I won't have you imitating me!" she exclaimed, stamping. "I won't have it!"

He admired this spirit of hers so much! To his own surprise, he had given in at once, and she had become radiant again. She used the word *armoire* several times to test him, however.

"It'll cost you a pretty penny to take that to New York," he had warned her.

But it had not. He had bought it for her, and it was going to New York as his. His *armoire*.

IT was time, Captain Musker thought, as the *Biskra* left Cape Bon astern, to decide what he was to do. He could no longer disguise from himself the fact that Cora Saverey had beaten him at his own game. He was in love with her, and she was aware of it. She seemed to have no care for her reputation, yet somehow no one had much to say against her. She was so open in her movements that she disarmed criticism. Moreover the manifold love affairs going on throughout the *Biskra* were in no way complicated by Cora Saverey. She remained smilingly outside of them all. Captain Musker had her to himself, but she held him off in a way that baffled and intoxicated him. When he used his old and well-tried methods, of exciting the pity which is not so much akin to love as it is the first stage of it, she would listen and then argue earnestly about duty. Captain Musker did not want to hear about duty. He was an authority on the subject. He had always done his duty. And he had reached that age when men like him feel they have earned a vacation from duty. He went so far as to say that if he were to go home to England and start being attentive to his wife, she would have him put in a sanitarium.

"Have you ever tried it?" asked Cora, making a sly grimace.

What amazed her was the Captain's all-engrossing selfishness. He thought about her all the time in a passionate way, yet he never considered her at all. He was gradually becoming the victim of his illusions. He did not believe in her, although he was in love with her. Cora, rather alarmed, perceived this. She was aware of it all the time as the ship drove across the western ocean. He was convinced it was only a matter of time before she would reward him by revealing herself as "very much like everybody else," as she phrased it to herself. This was a dangerous state of mind for any man. If Mr. Vokes, who was much engrossed with a nice girl from Michigan, had known of it, he would have felt adequately compensated. But he did not know of it. Not even the versatile Drinkwater was aware of it. The more upset Captain Musker became, the more caution he displayed in keeping his affairs secret. And when the ship had left the summer seas behind, and the slow swing and heave of

the North Atlantic under scudding clouds with a chill in the air had sent the women below-decks, Captain Musker had leisure and solitude to thrash the matter out. It was an ideal opportunity to master himself, but like most men in such circumstances, he did not succeed.

He saw, by the time he reached Sandy Hook, that he was infatuated with her, and only her acceptance could solve the problem. He stubbornly told himself that he would go to any length, now, to win her. It infuriated him, secretly, that she should have reversed the rôles. As a rule Captain Musker played the part of an Olympian Jove, dispensing the favor of his regard to gratified human females. It was the other way round now.

Cora had her problem too, but it was not Captain Musker. At Gibraltar she had received letters, from her manager, a clever girl like herself, reporting the news of the *atelier*, and from her husband. Cora's husband was her trouble. Cyril was always wanting money, but he had revealed no marked ability for earning it. He was an artist and younger than Cora. He was clever in a way, but it did not seem to be a way favored by the art-editors of New York magazines. Often, for long periods, he could not work at all, because he had been gassed during the war. In winter he had to go south. Cora's problem had been to get this husband, whom she loved, in the way of seeing himself as the world saw him—a sponge. It was not easy, because Cyril said he did not care what the world thought.

Cyril wrote to say he was succeeding. He had broken into the advertising game and had a contract. He did not say he wanted to see Cora. There was something funny about Cyril in that respect, as though his mind were clouded over. Of course he loved Cora; but it never occurred to him to make any demonstrations. If she went to Europe on business, he never asked her when she was coming back or expressed any longing to be with her. Since the war he had been like this. Cora loved him, naturally. Why shouldn't she? She gave him money. Certainly! That was Cyril, a curly-haired, blue-eyed, extremely nervous and slender young man whose knack of drawing comic puppies and boys with freckled faces was now being utilized by an advertising corporation.

It was an illusion of Cyril's that he was absolutely independent. He was also very proud. He had sometimes walked out of the East Thirty-eighth Street apartment, his head in the air, because Cora had been "fresh." He always walked in again, after a night spent on the sofa in his attic studio a couple of blocks down the street. To Cora this cloudiness of his mind was a call to lavish infinite patience and care upon him. It might pass. She often thought of the happiness that would be hers, when it had passed and he would look comprehendingly into her eyes at last.

But in the meanwhile, although Captain Musker did not perceive just how the problem appeared to Cora, she was often troubled by the craving for a fuller emotional life. Men had told her more than once, richer men than Captain Musker could ever hope to be, that she was wasting her own glorious gifts without possibility of return. She sometimes doubted her own wisdom. If she had been a lazy parasite, living on an assured and luxurious income from dividends and coupons, she might have abandoned her clear and vigorous outlook on life. But she ran a business shrewdly; she was in contact with reality every day except when on board ship. Her mind and heart never grew slack or flabby. She knew that those who give are those who receive most, in the realm of the spirit.

And when the time came to say good-by, she met Captain Musker up on the boat-

deck and thanked him for his kindness. She was looking wonderful in a close-fitting dress of black silk she had had made in London, a gleaming sheath for the radiant personality within.

"I am coming up to see you," he said bluntly. "I have your address. I have something to say. Can't say it on the ship."

"Please!" she begged him. "It would be so much better not to. I've had a wonderful time. But really and truly, there can't be anything else."

"I'm coming," he insisted.

He had the great wardrobe she had bought,—for she insisted on offering him a check,—her old Spanish *armoire*, sent up to her place; and a day or two later he proceeded to follow it. The words *armoire* and *amour* haunted him. To him Cora was not a New York *modiste* with a rating at the credit agencies. She was the embodiment of all the dream-women he had imagined, who had poured out the prodigality of their beauty and fascination before him. She was the spirit of French *chic* and elegance and naughtiness, dainty, desirable and at length accessible. He could not stay away from her. He had imagined the place where she lived, quietly yet voluptuously furnished—he and she alone. It was beyond his belief that anything so near to his long-cherished ambitions could fail to materialize now. He went up one evening. He could not reach her on the telephone, but gave a message he was coming to take her out to dinner.

"And you never even thought I might have another engagement," she suggested when he stood before her.

"Break it," he said. And he added: "You don't need to be up-stage with me, Cora. After—well, after Cairo and Heliopolis."

"Now, play fair!" she exclaimed angrily.

"All right. But come to dinner."

"I can't," she said. "I've got an engagement."

"Oh, break it!" he repeated. "Can't you?"

"No," she said honestly. "How do you like the *armoire*, Captain? Looks nice with that tapestry, don't you think?" She walked over to where the great cabinet stood, dark against the cream-colored wall of the room. He strode through the curtains after her, heavily charged with emotion. "I wonder, Captain, you haven't ever taken up collecting something. It's a wonderful relaxation for the mind from business." She was smiling, very sure of herself.

"Collect!" he repeated. "I collect something," he muttered. "I collect fine—do you know what I collect?"

Before she could answer, he had her in his arms and was crushing her face against his mouth. She suddenly became very still. Captain Musker's acute hearing warned him of a tiny sound in the hall, a key turning in the lock. Cora walked away from him, but kept her smiling face toward him.

"Oh!" he said. "Somebody else has a key."

"My husband," she said quietly. "I told you. He is coming in to take me to dinner."

CAPTAIN MUSKER looked about him heavily. For the moment the key was turning at the other end of the long hall in the front of the apartment, there was a silence. Then Cora went over to the *armoire* and turning the heavy silver handle, swung open the door. She made a gesture.

"You are to do this for my sake, Captain. I ask you. It will be all right. Please."

Captain Musker, scarcely aware of his own actions, stepped in, and the door closed upon him.

It was a remarkable experience for the commander of the T. S. S. *Biskra* of the Afro-Iberian Mail. He never forgot it. He found himself in a perfumed darkness,

Mr. Peters' Diet

He's on it. He also is doing his daily dozen. "He's not been well," writes the chronicler of his actions, "but he promises soon to be on the highroad to recovery." You must read the new chapter of the Peters Saga in the next issue; of course the historian is—

ROBERT BENCHLEY



"I just knew you would come back to Fels-Naptha!"

Mother: "I've been tempted at different times into trying all sorts of soaps. I bought chips, powders and other new-fangled cleaners that claim to do about everything but the ironing and mending. But I always come back to Fels-Naptha. Nothing else gives so much help, and is so easy on the clothes."

Daughter: "Yes, isn't it wonderful how Fels-Naptha helps! I didn't realize how much until I tried other soaps. Then I began to see the difference. It must be the naptha, or the way it's mixed. It is so easy with Fels-Naptha to get my clothes clean

and sweet and white. And I just love the naptha odor—don't you?"

Thousands upon thousands of other women—after trying "chips, powders and other new-fangled cleaners"—have also come back to Fels-Naptha. And for a very good reason.

Fels-Naptha gives you *extra help* you cannot get from any other soap, no matter what its form, or color, or shape, or price. That's because it is more than soap—a great deal more than just "naptha soap." It is good soap and plenty of dirt-loosening naptha combined for perfect teamwork in one golden bar.

Ask your grocer for a bar of Fels-Naptha. Smell its clean naptha odor.

Then prove the *extra* helpfulness of Fels-Naptha by trying it in your home.

No matter how you prefer to wash clothes—in a washing machine or tub—in boiling, lukewarm or cool water—you can get more help from Fels-Naptha than from any other soap. Millions of women are getting the benefit of this *extra* help. Why not you?

Camping or traveling this summer? Be sure to have Fels-Naptha's *extra* help! Loosens ground-in dirt from clothes so easily. Removes grease from dishes, even with cool water.



Can You Say "Goodbye, Kitchen"?

EVERY Sunday morning, any afternoon, you can cook a Whole Meal in the oven—IF your Gas Range is equipped with a

LORAIN OVEN HEAT REGULATOR

Just "set" the Red Wheel and say, "Goodbye, Kitchen!" When you return, hours later, the dinner is perfectly cooked.

For successful baking and the oven-canning of fruits and tomatoes, buy a Clark Jewel, Dangler, Direct Action, New Process, Quick Meal or Reliable Gas Range with Lorain Oven Heat Regulator.

Don't let anybody fool you with a "just-as-good". The Lorain is the only oven heat regulator made entirely and unconditionally guaranteed by a stove manufacturer. Accept no substitute. Insist upon a Lorain Red Wheel Gas Range.

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1926

caressed by soft fabrics impregnated with the exquisite odor of *Toujours Fidèle* which Cora had been using all the voyage. It was as though he had been plunged into the very heart of her personality. *Toujours Fidèle!* Had she used that scent to show him that, after all, he was on a wild-goose chase? He pondered for a moment, and then he was startled to hear voices close by him. He could hear perfectly! There was a kiss.

"Cora!" A young voice, eager, triumphant.

"Darling!"

"Cora, are you ready? This evening is on me, you know. I've just been to the office. They're immensely pleased with my drawings. They're sick of the standardized stuff. Mine's—well, mine's different, you know."

"It's wonderful, darling. We'll have such times together. Do you know, I believe you're feeling better now than since you came back."

"I certainly do, Cora. I work all day and half the night. When you were in Paris, I was working awfully hard. Sometimes I missed you."

"Cyril!"

"Yes. You have done lots for me, you know. Now I'm started, you'll be able to give up this beastly outfit."

"Oh, not yet, Cyril. Tell me,"—coaxingly,—*"did you really miss me while I was away so long?"*

"Of course. Why on earth did you come home in that roundabout way? I wanted you."

"Well, I'd never seen the Mediterranean, Cyril. Weren't you jealous because I was away so long, enjoying myself?"

"Good Lord, no. You're Cora! You're my blessed angel. Why, the very idea is out of the question."

THE LOVE ALTAR

(Continued from page 85)

"From the time I met you here years ago with your aunt. I think you know that." A queer dryness marked the words.

"But I just wanted you to tell me. You see, I've held you in my heart so long. And I've been so glad that I was independent and alone; that I didn't have to marry—for any reason whatsoever." She glanced away from him toward the interlacing little paths that seemed to end nowhere. "When you were last in New York, just before you left for India, I didn't even know if I should ever see you again."

"Not such a bad place, India," he observed. "We must go there sometime. Elsie loathed the climate, but I rather liked it. And there's such a large British population that you might very well fancy yourself in England. We shall be living in England, you know. I've always wanted that."

"But aren't your business interests in the Orient just now?"

She had pictured a life with him full of color, among the people of the East, quite new and different.

"Oh, I'm retiring from business. We'll have a country house and live there all the year round."

Abruptly she turned back to him.

"Roger—you've changed a lot, haven't you? Why, you used to talk to me by the hour about the joy of travel—of seeing new sights when your eyes were filled with the old ones."

"But that was some years ago, my dear. I was younger. I'm rather fed up on roaming." He said it conclusively.

A moment she stared. Then the same twinge of brutal amusement twisted her lips. She said nothing. A vague, unnamable wonder seized her.

"And I was thinking things over," he proceeded. "It would mean a lot of red

"Cyril, I believe you're the most extraordinary husband a girl ever had."

"Am I? Why?"

"You're so absolutely straight!" There was the sound of another kiss.

"I don't know what you mean, Cora."

"Why, listen. Suppose I said to you: 'Cyril, there is a man hidden in that wardrobe.' What would you do?"

"Do? Why—oh, you're talking rubbish. You! Do put your things on and come on out to dinner. I've tons to tell you. We're having a little bust, up at the studio afterward."

"I'm ready, darling. Shall we go?"

CAPTAIN MUSKER, with his acute sense of hearing, was able to follow them out to the hall door, and he fancied Cora slammed it harder than was actually necessary in order to let him know they were gone. He felt stifled in that place hung with the rows of fragrant garments. He wiped his forehead with his handkerchief. He turned the handle gently and stepped out into Cora's bedroom.

There was no one in the apartment. Out in front, the *atelier* was lit by a single high-power globe in front of the desk. Captain Musker looked round him thoughtfully. He noticed a writing-pad by the telephone on her dressing-table. He took it and wrote on it two words and his initials. It was against his character to give in with grace. It was the most humiliating moment of his life. He wanted revenge, but there was nothing he could do. Outside was New York. In his pocket Captain Musker had a small leather book of telephone addresses. He laid the piece of paper by the bottle of *Toujours Fidèle* and went out.

Cora Saverey, coming in at midnight, found the note and smiled happily.

It read: "You win."

tape, getting married here. So I've made arrangements to leave tomorrow for London. Since that is to be our residence, you see how simple it will be."

"Quite," she responded.

He rose.

"Shall we go in to lunch?"

"We may as well."

HE took her arm in a possessive manner that suddenly and inexplicably irritated her. She drew it away under cover of pointing out a monstrous magnolia blossom, red as blood.

"Stuffy flowers," he remarked. "I hate strong odors. They're everywhere in Italy—of one kind or another."

As they crossed the road, he paused, seeing her for the first time under the engulfing gold sunlight.

"What a stunning woman you are, Rhoda!" His gaze traveled the length of her shimmeringly close gown, flesh silk stockings and slender kid pumps. "Do you always wear clothes as thin as that?" he added.

"Yes," she flung out in sudden reckless defiance, "I like to feel I have on as few as possible."

Without another word they went indoors. They were shown to a table in the curve of glass-cased alcove overlooking the Bay. Below them the cliff dropped sheer into gleaming waters. Flat-bottomed boats with brown, bare-legged fishermen lay lazily on the waves not far from shore. Beyond, the primitive rowboats with placards hoisted above their oarsmen, proclaiming the hotels they represented, awaited passengers from the steamer that each day tottered like a feeble old man on its way from Naples to Capri.

A balm, a blessing, a thrill, all wafted



"MY ENTIRE BODY, on account of chronic constipation, was completely run down. This condition brought about heartburn, a coated tongue, dull eyes, a sallow skin blotched with pimples and recurrent boils, not to mention undue fatigue and headaches. On the advice of a specialist in stomach and skin diseases, I began to take two yeast cakes every day. The result: Within five weeks my stomach was restored to normal working order. Today my body is strong, vigorous, and healthful."

R. W. HELSER, Philadelphia, Pa.



"FLEISCHMANN'S YEAST has done wonders for me. I was under treatment for indigestion, but nothing seemed able to relieve the intense pain. A friend of mine called my attention to Fleischmann's Yeast. I started to take it. Almost immediately I had fewer attacks of indigestion. Now I am enjoying good health. My skin is clear and I feel rested when I wake in the morning."

MILDRED HARRIS, Springfield, Mass.



THIS FAMOUS FOOD tones up the entire system— aids digestion—clears the skin—banishes constipation.

Dividends in Health . . .

Constipation, skin, and stomach disorders, corrected—the reward of invincible energy again—*through one simple food*

NOT a "cure-all," not a medicine in any sense—Fleischmann's Yeast is simply a remarkable fresh food.

The millions of tiny active yeast plants in every cake invigorate the whole system. They aid digestion—clear the skin—banish the poisons of constipation. Where cathartics give only temporary relief, yeast strengthens the intestinal muscles and makes them healthy and active. And day by day it releases new stores of energy.

Eat two or three cakes regularly every day before meals: on crackers—in fruit juices, water or milk—or just plain, nibbled from the cake. For constipation especially, dissolve one cake in hot water (not scalding) before breakfast and at bedtime. Buy several cakes at a time—they will keep fresh in a cool dry place for two or three days. All grocers have Fleischmann's Yeast. Start eating it today!

And let us send you a free copy of our latest booklet on Yeast for Health. Health Research Dept. M-30, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington Street, New York.



"I SUFFERED from my stomach. I had severe headaches and had boils and pimples on my face and body that were annoying and embarrassing. Nothing gave permanent relief until I used Fleischmann's Yeast. In about three months the headaches had entirely stopped and the pimples and boils had completely disappeared."

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After shaving— AQUA VELVA keeps the face feeling fit

THIS hot weather is hard on the newly shaven face. The skin needs special protection. Aqua Velva, Williams new after-shaving preparation, is as soothing as a massage. It keeps the skin like velvet all day long, just as Williams Shaving Cream leaves it.

1. It tingles delightfully when applied.
2. It gives first aid to little cuts.
3. It delights with its man-style fragrance.
4. It safeguards against sun and wind.
5. It conserves the needed natural moisture in the skin. (Powders absorb this—leave the skin dry.) Aqua Velva keeps the skin flexible and smooth all day long.

Send the coupon or a postcard for a generous test bottle FREE. The large five ounce bottle at your dealer's is 50c (60c in Canada). By mail postpaid in case he is out of it.

For use after shaving



Made by the makers of Williams Shaving Cream
The J. B. Williams Co., Dept. 107, Glastonbury, Conn.
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Send free test bottle of Aqua Velva.

Red Book 7-50

from the sunlit, malachite-green, lapis-blue of changing waters. Every mood a woman might know seemed reflected—every yearning hope, every mad thought. . . .

"By gad, I never knew worse service!" burst in on her. "These people seem to do nothing but laze in the sun. Here, waiter—take my order, will you?"

"What's the hurry, Roger?" Her gaze came slowly back to him. "We ourselves haven't anything to do all day but laze in the sun."

"We're driving over to Amalfi for tea. May as well see it, now that we're here."

AN attentive servant bent toward him, placing a menu in his hand. His severe blue eyes ran its length.

"Look here," he protested, his face taking on a red tinge, "haven't you anything but veal and spaghetti in this country?"

"Roger!" She felt the blood surge to her own cheeks. "You can get anything you want here. This hotel is known for its cuisine."

"That is quite true, sir," added the waiter solicitously.

"Then bring me a grilled chop and potato."

She took particular delight in making her luncheon consist entirely of dishes with preposterous names.

"You shouldn't eat such concoctions, my dear," he admonished. "They're an insult to the stomach."

"I rather like an insult now and then," she smiled.

He looked across the table in a startled way; then, without a word, picked up a roll, cracked it open between his hands, and buttered it carefully. She watched the process, recalling that never before had she taken a meal alone with him. During his brief visits to America they had met at dinners, receptions, dances. Their hours together had been stolen in the midst of a group of people completely absorbed in self. But never had they really known an hour of communion in the midst of solitude. And she had so longed for solitude with him!

She watched him eat his roll, teeth cracking it with every bite. Her fingers crumbled her own with a queer, devastating tenseness, as if they ached to destroy.

"Roger," broke from her finally, "what is it made you love me? Why have you wanted me all these years?"

He gave her a blank stare.

"Need we go over that, Rhoda? You must remember what I told you the last time we met."

"Yes—yes! But tell me again."

A half-smile of amused tolerance lifted his expression.

"Why, my dear, you have all the qualities I've always wanted in my wife—beauty, grace, dignity, poise, common sense—"

"I haven't any of those, Roger. You may as well know it." She felt a mad desire now to shock him out of this armor of complacency.

"I'm not beautiful—just sort of striking. I've neither grace nor dignity—I don't give a damn about what people think. As for poise and common sense—I'm always doing reckless, unbridled, undisciplined things. And I'm sentimental as the deuce! So now, don't you hate me?"

"My dear child,"—he popped open another roll; as she plunged ahead, he had not stopped eating,—"you have a completely distorted estimate of yourself. I think I know you better than that."

"I tell you, it's the truth! Now, do you still want to marry me?"

He laid down fork and knife.

"What an absurd idea! I not only want to, but I'm determined to. Haven't I come to this God-forsaken hole just to fetch you?"

"But I warn you, I can't change. As I am, I'll always be."

THE words so choked her that she could not swallow. Her eyes, her throat, were filled to the point of hysteria.

"I'm not troubled as to how we'll get along. There will be a period of adjustment, very likely." His perfect features relaxed with a return of comfortable tolerance. "But we were meant for each other, my dear. Why, if I hadn't been married when we met, you'd have been my wife these fourteen years."

She pushed aside her plate. Strangely enough, at the moment, she felt the focus of another gaze drawing hers. She glanced into the room, to encounter the young Frenchman at a small table near theirs. A light flooded his eyes as she bowed.

"Who is that?" came from across the table.

"I don't know," she took a poignant delight in answering.

"Don't know?" He looked bewildered.

"No. I just picked him up on the train." He coughed, leaned over as if he could not have understood her correctly.

"You mean to tell me you picked up acquaintance without an introduction?"

"Actually. And he's followed me here."

She leaned back. His gesture of confusion was hers of triumph. At last she had ruffled his immutable composure. In that, she felt a sudden tragic satisfaction. But only momentary. He turned an appraising eye upon the Frenchman. Not jealous, nor resentful—not even disapproving; merely appraising.

"But, of course," he vouchsafed finally, "why shouldn't you talk to him? He's nothing but a boy."

"He taught me heaps in the few hours we were together," she pursued with ruthless intent.

"We all have much to learn from today's youth—chiefly what not to do."

"You forget," came from her quickly, "I'm years younger than you, Roger."

"Not more than ten, my dear—though you have my permission to add to that as many as you please."

"A thousand," she whispered.

But either he did not or preferred not to hear. Having disposed of the Frenchman, he proceeded to carve through his chop with utmost attention to detail, cutting the meat carefully away from the bone, then into small squares. On completion of this process, he pushed the squares into a mound in the center of his plate.

She watched him, fascinated. She simply could not tear her eyes from following each move that he made.

Next he pursued the same course with the potatoes, arranging them as a sort of decorative border. Then he cracked open another roll into two even halves, spread the butter thickly and with assiduous care.

"Roger," she flung at him suddenly, "what was the matter with your wife? What did she die of, I mean?"

He frowned a bit, probably at the bad taste of such a question at such a time. Then he answered, quite as a matter of course:

"Nervous prostration."

HER head went back. A long, piercing laugh tore from her lips. It shook her shoulders, her torso, her whole frame—like a devastating flash of lightning through clouds. It concentrated upon her the eyes of the entire room.

Unsteadily she got to her feet.

The man opposite rose at once, very obviously embarrassed beyond words by her uncontrolled outburst.

"Never mind," she trembled, between laughter and tears. "I—I'm just—upset. Tired out. It—it's been long—my journey. I'll go to my room. You finish—what you're doing."

She made her way blindly to the door and heard his footsteps following. If he came

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Gillette pre-eminence is an accomplished fact!
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Auto-Intoxication

-self-poisoning takes from nearly everyone some part of health—some part of vitality

AUTO-INTOXICATION is a direct result of the nervous, but physically inactive lives so many of us lead—lives crowded with things to do—but short on outdoor work—short on rest.

We ride in motors—we rarely walk. We over-eat, we under-exercise. All too often, food remains within us for more than twenty-four hours, fermenting, setting up the poisons which produce Auto-Intoxication.

And then the troubles start. Bad as these poisons are in bringing on lassitude, sudden fatigue and intestinal derangements, they have perhaps even a worse effect upon the central nervous system! For while they dull the wits, they sharpen the nerves. They make men and women nervous and irritable.

• • • • •

Few of us are free from Auto-Intoxication. For few of us live normally, few of us have hard outdoor work to do, few of us keep our bodies free from the poisons of waste.

Sal Hepatica prevents and relieves Auto-Intoxication because it promptly corrects "stoppage" and sweeps away the poisons from the intestines.

Sal Hepatica is a palatable effervescent saline. By the mechanical action of water plus the eliminant effects of several salts in solution, it induces prompt peristalsis. It is of great help, not alone in Auto-Intoxication itself, but in many other conditions where the first step is to cleanse the system safely of those bodily poisons which are at the root of so many of our troubles. It's a good rule to have a bottle in the house.

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Sal Hepatica



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beyond that door, she knew that she would scream outright.

"Please,"—she turned uncertainly,—*"please go back. I—I'll be all right soon. Just a little while. I'll send for you."*

Still with groping step, she went up the stairs and along the corridor.

SHE opened the door of her room, closed it swiftly as if for protection, and stood irresolutely in the center, tears of laughter streaming down her cheeks. Her teeth bit into her lip, trying in vain to check them.

What a heavenly joke! What a superlative joke on her! All the years she had buried at the feet of an idol—they were nothing but dust now. All the years ahead—what were they? They closed round her, breathless, stifling, terrible. Yet she could not stop laughing.

Like the sun trickling through the dropped wooden blinds of her window, the pale ghost of her dreams stalked before her, disjointed, limp. Poor decrepit old wreck! What was she to do with it?

She went to the window, tossed open the blinds.

Just outside of them stood the young Frenchman.

"I wish to speak with you," he said hurriedly. "You must let me in—please."

Without waiting for permission, he stepped inside and shut the blinds. His eager haste took all authority from her.

An instinctive gesture covered her mouth with her hand, so that he might not note its twitching. But she could not whisk away the tears of hysteria. To these his eyes clung.

He came closer, spoke low.

"You feel as though you were looking upon a corpse—eh?"

She looked up at him. Yet she could not answer. He had defined her emotion so completely, so abysmally. A grave—new sod.

This man walking into her life so strangely, from nowhere, how odd was his intuitive reading of her mood! At this moment there was every rational reason why she should send him away. Intruder—interloper. Instead she clung madly to the solace of his presence. She had felt so grotesquely alone.

"I thought it would be so," he told her softly. "I was afraid—for you. That is why I came."

"You had a premonition?"

"No—a certainty. I longed to ask if I might ride from Naples with you. But I knew I should be—in the way."

She found herself turning to him with the outstretched pleading hands of a very young girl—almost as if a power outside herself propelled her toward his sympathy.

"Why do you suppose it has happened—like this?"

He caught up the hands, pressed them against his lips.

"Because for fourteen years you have been in love with one who never existed."

HER hands remained unheeded within his warm clasp.

"If I had found him different physically—" she pondered. "I expected that. It would have meant nothing."

"But do you not see? All the beauty with which you have endowed him mentally—it is yours, not his. It was never his. Not even when you first met. You have forced the woman to remain on her knees to the girl's ideal."

She shuddered, drew her hands away, turned that she might hide her eyes.

"He is so old, so—so fusty."

"You have saved your youth, *chérie*," breathed the Frenchman, following her, "for one who has never been young."

The tender little word of endearment, spoken in his native tongue, fell like a chord of minor music across her nerves. It soothed. Its astonishing intimacy became a natural thing.

"You seem to understand so well," she put wonderingly.

"Why should I not understand?" He spoke without hesitation. "I am the one you really came to meet at Sorrento."

"Please,"—she covered her eyes with one hand and with the other waved him from her,—*"please don't laugh at me. Let me laugh at myself by all means; but don't—"*

"But, *bien-aimée*, I do not laugh. Can you not see—there is a Power brought you here. And it was never for that other one. I know you Anglo-Saxons—I have lived frequently among you. Only your pride would make you marry this man—the fear of being made the fool! And that must never be." He brought down his foot emphatically. "Never—you understand!"

"I had already decided on that. His—his wife"—she began laughing again—"died of nervous prostration."

He took no notice of her words—only gripped her hands once more, tightly, with a clasp that seemed to send his blood through her veins.

"Listen—I love you! Do you hear me? I love you, as I have dreamed of loving. I have traveled much—through far countries. I have seen remote corners of the world. In them all I have looked into the eyes of women—and always, beyond, I have seen yours. Subtle, humorous, passionate, beckoning. Those are the eyes I have looked for—everywhere. Yesterday, through the smoke of a railway carriage—I found them. Do you think I did not know—instantly—they were for me?"

"You must be quite mad," she murmured in a sort of mesmerized monotone.

"No—it is you who have been that. You have been doing a mad thing all these years. Now do a sensible one. *Chérie—je t'adore!* Come with me—immediately. We will be married in Naples. I have power, influence. It can be arranged without delay. You must escape this man—with me."

"But until last night," she heard herself whispering, "I didn't even know you existed."

"What does that matter? I ask you—have we not been *en rapport* from the beginning?"

"But—it's insane, what you suggest!" "I have loved you from the beginning. What more can there be?"

They stood facing each other, speaking in the hushed, vibrating tones of conspirators. His voice, filling her ears, carried her on its current irresistibly. In fourteen years she had been as a book of blank pages to the man who should have known her. And in a few hours this one had read the torn pages of her heart.

Like a tangible warm cloak the magnetism of his sympathy wrapped round her. She could not loose its folds—had no desire to do so.

Her breath caught; she gave a startled glance about the room. Bags only half unpacked. And almost any moment Roger would be sending word that he was ready to leave for the Amalfi drive. Hours of riding beside him through beauty he would not see!

She turned back to meet the Frenchman's caressing eagerness. The urge of the gambler swept her to him, though she did not perceptibly move.

"You know, don't you," she made final protest, "that I'm—well, at least, a few years older than you?"

His understanding smile did not leave her.

"*Chérie*—in love there is no age. Besides, you have so much to learn of all that has been locked up in those fourteen years—so much that I can teach you. Do you not see—you are nothing but a child; and I adore you."

THEY drove through the amber-amethyst twilight, into Naples. A silent drive, fraught with wonder.

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Graduate Nurse

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No laundry—discard as easily as a piece of tissue

Gastrogen Tablets never stop digestion by going too far!



GASTROGEN Tablets are free from the one great objection which can be urged against so many digestive remedies.

They very promptly relieve indigestion, "heartburn" and gas. They correct acidity, but there they stop. They do not interfere with the normal, healthy process of digestion itself.

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Gastrogen Tablets work in a different way!

The peculiar virtue of Gastrogen Tablets is that once hyper-acidity is overcome, once the distress is gone, the stomach remains "in neutral." Nature quickly restores the correct amount of mild acidity (1-5 of one per cent) and any amount of Gastrogen remaining rests inert and passes through the system unchanged.

Your indigestion vanishes quickly, your "heartburn" and distress is rapidly overcome, and your stomach goes on in its normal work of digesting food without interference.

Gastrogen Tablets are pleasant and harmless

Gastrogen Tablets are mild, safe and effective. They combat digestive disturbances without retarding digestion. They are pleasant to taste. They purify the breath and they are very prompt in the relief they give.

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Without charge or obligation on my part, send me your special introductory packet of 6 Gastrogen Tablets.

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Into her bags she had slung her things, helter-skelter—scribbled a note with some excuse Roger's imagination could encompass, then slipped away.

She lifted her eyes to the early stars. The thrill of her escape still sang through her, like a hand drawn across harp-strings. Free! Free at last! Life really beginning! She

turned under the glow of the eyes upon her, laughed with the shine of the stars in her own. Then:

"But," she gasped suddenly, "I don't even know your name."

"What is a name in eternity?" answered the lips so close to hers. "For me, yours will always be Romance."

THE BANDIT COMES HOME

(Continued from page 69)

"Look, Al—that's the Doc with him now!"

"Where?" "Lemme see!"

And as they peered excitedly in, the same queer silence fell among them as among the men inside. But looking out into the moonlit night, I saw the crowd increasing now. Two old sleighs and a saddle-horse, and a number of automobiles, already stood by the roadside, showing dark against the snow; and a score or more of people had come up in front of the store.

"Where is he?" "There. The Doc's with him."

Abruptly the silence was broken again by the deep, hard voice of a large woman who pushed quickly through the crowd:

"Now, you children clear right out of this and go on home, every one of you!" And as they moved a little back: "Nice example to set for our boys and girls!" she added, in an angry tone. "Fine state this country is gettin' in, when even school-teachers rob, plunder and kill!"

"'Twas the War done it, I'm afraid," the low voice of a thin little woman replied. "He fell in with a lot of wild companions, an' he jest couldn't settle down."

"Then why come and marry one of our girls—and then go out and kill some more—and bring every newspaper in New England pointing the finger of shame at this village? Just because a man serves his country is no excuse for murder, is it?"

"No, I don't suppose it is. Still, war is murder—an' he got one eye put out, over in France. You can't teach school with only one eye."

"What are you doing, Sarah Towne—excusing the man, right in front of these children?"

"No, I aint excusing him!" The low voice was quivering now. "But remember he aint a murderer yet. That chief of police in Barre aint dead."

"How about all his other crimes?"

"There's only one we know about—that auto he stole in Connecticut."

"Yes, and he nearly killed a deputy then! I got no use for this fightin' the law—this bootleggin' and this robbin' and killin'! I got no use for mercy here! A nice girl and her baby ruined for life—all on account of him! And him bringin' it all right home to us, too! When crimes like his are spreadin' so fast that they push right into the heart of New England, I say it's high time somethin' was done!"

INSIDE the store, the telephone rang. With a nervous jump, one of the men answered it.

"Yes, we got him here," he said. "Yes, Dave Warren captured him, up on his farm by Howland's Hill. . . . What's that? . . . I'll ask him. Hold the wire." The man at the telephone turned back. "Dave—this is a man from the Boston Herald—wants you to talk to him over the phone."

But as Dave Warren quickly rose, the grim voice of the old storekeeper was heard: "Don't know as I'd talk, if I was you, Dave."

Dave stood stock still, looked slowly around at the motionless faces there; and as he did so, the exultant gleam in his small blue eyes died out.

"Guess I wont, then," he replied. The

man at the telephone turned back and spoke to the reporter:

"He says he don't want to talk tonight. . . . No. . . . What's that? . . . Yes, he's right here. The Doctor's fixin' up his arm. . . . Hold the wire till I find out."

And this time he turned to the prisoner. "Steve," he said. The wounded man looked up with a quick jerk of his head. It was the first time anyone there had called him by his Christian name.

"What does he want of me?" he asked.

"He says he'll give you a hundred dollars if you'll tell him your story tonight."

A rigid silence came again. "Tell him he can go to hell," the prisoner said, in a grim low tone. "No—don't say that—he'll print it. Wait a minute. Just say—no."

The man at the telephone obeyed, and then hung up the receiver.

"I wonder how much longer that sheriff from Barre is going to take?" muttered the old storekeeper.

"Ought to be here any minute now."

ONCE more the silence fell; and once again, as I glanced about, I felt that queerly rigid tension. Over there behind the stove, the physician had completed his work. Nothing more for him to do—but still he sat with his huge broad back turned upon the rest of us. In a low voice he spoke again:

"Now, tomorrow have the prison doctor come and take a look at this. And I wouldn't try to stand on that foot. That ankle bruise is pretty ugly."

"All right, sir." Silence as before.

"Do you want to see your wife?"

"In the circumstances—no," the former school-teacher replied. Another pause—and then the Doctor's deep gruff voice was heard again, slow, distinct and steady now:

"The circumstances aren't quite so bad as we'd a right to expect."

"Why not?" the prisoner sharply asked.

"I heard from the Barre hospital tonight. The chief of police, they tell me, is about out of danger now." The outlaw seemed to quiver a bit.

"That's good," he answered.

"Yes—it is," the Doctor said, slowly and distinctly, as though for all the room to hear. "It means you'll have a chance some day to try to wipe out this part of your life, and be what you set out to be. In the meantime, down there in Connecticut, or wherever you may be, I want you to write me every week. And I'll write you. I'm going to stand right back of you, Steve. The picture I'm going to keep in my mind is the one of that other time you came home—in uniform, before going to France—to speak to the boys and girls of your school. That's a picture I don't propose to forget."

While he had been speaking, two motors had arrived outside.

"The sheriff's here," somebody announced.

"All right, I guess he's ready now," the Doctor answered quietly. "Good luck to you, boy. Here, wait a minute. You'd better take my coat for the ride. You're wet, and it's pretty cold tonight."

The younger man said, "Thank you, Dad," slipped into the fur overcoat, and limped quickly out of the room.

The most brilliant lights of the ball-room cannot lessen the perfectly natural color you have in your cheeks when you use your own tone of Pompeian Bloom.



"How well
you look!"

Pompeian Bloom gives
your cheeks a color
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By MADAME JEANNETTE

Famous cosmetician, retained by The Pompeian Laboratories as a consultant to give authentic advice regarding the care of the skin and the proper use of beauty preparations.

I RECENTLY overheard one of my friends say to another: "You, for one, need no rouge, my dear. What lovely natural coloring!" But the truth was this—like thousands of other women, she had found a rouge that gave her cheeks the exquisite natural coloring of a girl in her teens. That rouge is Pompeian Bloom.

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From the shade chart you can easily select the particular shade of Pompeian Bloom for your type of complexion.

**SHADE CHART for selecting
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Medium Skin: The average American woman has the medium skin-tone—pleasantly warm in tone, with a faint sugges-

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If you are slightly tanned, you may find the **Orange** tint more becoming. And sometimes women with medium skin who have very dark hair get a brilliant result with the **Oriental** tint.

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Street.....

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City..... State.....

Shade of rouge wanted.....

This coupon void after Dec. 30, 1926

NOBODY AT ALL

(Continued from page 53)

the way through that mess inside and was lured into a corner by the terrible Mrs. Coakley, who wanted to whisper in my ear. That's what I've been through for you."

Eve did not answer. It was one of her charms that she did not exhaust men by clever answers. She danced, and the music thrummed and swung and tottered, and Neil Waterhouse looked down at her tenderly.

"How beautiful you are tonight!"

"It's a pretty dress," she said indifferently.

"How does it feel to be beautiful?"

"It doesn't feel. It's numb."

"We might try rubbing it with alcohol. There's plenty to be had."

"No. Let's dance."

"It's much better," he agreed.

HE was taller than Eve, without Clyde Barrows' good looks, with a manner less drilled, and a certain awkwardness and eagerness as if he were feeling after his place in the world and had not quite found it. All the awkwardness as well as the charm was drawn now into concentration on his partner as he danced with her.

"What a pity!" she said as the music stopped. "I was hoping that particular dance had no end."

"So was I," he said, with greater intensity; "still, it doesn't matter, Eve. Dancing or standing still, it's all the same and equally heaven when I'm with you."

"Don't overdo it, Neil," said Eve lightly.

"I can't overdo it."

"Yes, you can. By forgetting that I'm a proper married lady and that you are the rightful prey of Lucille Coakley."

He gave a short, unpleasant laugh.

"I am, am I? I'm not engaged to Lucille."

"Maybe you'd better be. She's a very dear girl, Neil. She is oddly unlike her mother. Every time I see her, my respect for the departed Mr. Coakley goes up."

"Forget her," said Neil; "there's the music." And under cover of its opening confusion of melody, he breathed, "Come, darling," as he swung her out into the middle of the floor again. There in the midst of the young crowd they were alone again, or felt they were—until Eve said suddenly:

"There's my husband watching us. I'll stop after this dance, Neil."

"Why should you stop?"

"He will worry. He doesn't like me to be conspicuous with handsome young men."

"Don't make fun of me, Eve."

"I'm not," said Eve with sudden heat. "I'm making fun of myself. I'm like a child that's been misbehaving and is being called in from play. I'm probably going to be—very kindly—taken to account."

"But why—"

"It's the penalty of being nobody," said Eve. "Poor Clyde lives in terror lest I make myself conspicuous and bring disgrace on him. And why should I? I'm very fond of Clyde."

"You're not fond enough of Clyde."

"For what?"

"For anything. You haven't any business

being married to Clyde and living as you live—in that soundless way. Of course it's all rubbish about being watched and taken to task. You are twice as beautiful and twice as attractive as any woman here, and they all know it."

"If I were, that would be my greatest sin—the one they never forgive. It doesn't do here."

"Nothing does here. Come away with me, Eve."

"You know what you're saying?" she asked lightly.

"Know! I've been trying to say it for weeks!"

"There is my husband leaving. He's gone back into the house. That's my signal. I'd better stop."

Neil stopped abruptly as they reached the edge of the dance floor, and stepped with her into the circle of half-dark lawn that lay between the marquee and the house. His face was dark until he took her arm and felt it tremble.

"Why, Eve—you're trembling!" he said, and led her to a shadowed place on the terrace where they could stand talking, as if most casually.

"I'm shaking. I can't help it. And it's not just my arm."

"Not afraid—or startled by what I said—"

"No—neither; it's delight, I think, at beginning to be thrilled. It makes me feel that all that crowd in there are so inconsequent. You won't believe it, Neil, but I was most romantic six years ago when Clyde brought me here. I giggled and laughed and hung on men's arms and made up to people and was happy. But they didn't like me—not the women. And even the men thought I wasn't safe, at least inside their group. They made it cruelly clear. Clyde was worried and ashamed. He began to teach me what important things were, how to watch my step and always consider this and that social importance, and to realize that if I were to love and care for him, and he to love me, it must be well within the limits of what these people thought proper. I had to succeed with them. I had to learn all the ropes and how to climb them."

"What rubbish! If Clyde married you as you were, he must have liked you that way."

"He liked me—but he liked his society too. He couldn't give up either of us. So we had to make friends. And we did. Even Mrs. Coakley admits me to her small parties, calling me Eva as a kind of permanent penance. But I still know that when I come around, they whisper even now that I was nobody—"

"My God," said Neil, "all that bunch in there don't amount to much! Why, they're not all born with a silver spoon in their mouths. The place is filled with comers!"

"But you see," Eve went on smoothly, "I wasn't just an ordinary nobody. I was a dangerous sort of nobody. I was a mannequin—I showed off dresses to advantage. I earned my living by my looks. And so— even now in my old age—"

"Please don't," urged Neil, "don't talk like that, Eve. Forget the people in there. You never cared for Clyde—though he must have for you. Why, I'm sure you don't. You're different when you're with him, when he's around. When you get off with me and Sybil, you're much happier."

"Clyde thinks I spend too much time with you young people."

"I'm as old as you are."

"Technically I'm older. I'm married to the older set. Oh, Neil, don't you see what I mean—"

"I see nothing," said Neil, "except that I

love you. I've fought it and tried to stop it. But here it is. It can't be stopped and I've given in. I no longer want to stop it. I don't want anything under the canopy of heaven but you."

He bent toward her, and felt her tremble again against his arm.

"Take me in, Neil—we can't talk here—in a few days—somewhere."

He straightened up. A couple was sauntering toward them.

As she entered the crowd again, Eve was magically lovely. Older women watched her shrewdly as she passed them with Neil Waterhouse by her side. But the men all looked—and looked again. That was what Clyde felt and hated.

"Hello, Waterhouse," he said, meeting them. "how are you tonight?"

"Fine."

"I hear you and a certain young lady are going to announce something one of these days."

"Did you?"

Clyde smiled fatuously.

"Got it from your mother."

Neil turned to Eve, repeating all he had said in one comprehensive glance, then went away. And still Eve's hand trembled as she felt her husband touch it. They agreed to go home, and she mounted the thick-carpeted stairs to the improvised dressing-rooms where maids waited with wraps. Mrs. Coakley, with a lace scarf of many years' standing over her head, stood ready to leave also. She regarded Eve rather sternly.

"My nephew informs me that he is taking your sister home, Eva."

"That's nice," said Eve.

"Um," said Mrs. Coakley. "She is a very confident girl, your sister, Eva. She seems to be able to attract young men."

Eve flared. "She is young and happy and unconscious, Mrs. Coakley. I hope she will stay so."

Mrs. Coakley looked skeptical to the point of insult.

"I see," she remarked.

Eve lifted a delicate wrap to her shoulders.

"Steve seems to be head over heels in love with Sybil, doesn't he?" she observed.

SHE knew it was tactless and ill-timed, but the roughness of the remark, the crudeness of it, gave her a sudden joy. She was glad to see the other woman get red even to her throat in her anger.

"Oh, I doubt that," said Mrs. Coakley; "only a boyish infatuation. He is very young and susceptible to certain kinds of influence. I must talk to him." In the deadliness of that tone Eve realized the harm she had done. She had disregarded Clyde's advice, which was to pretend innocence of Steve's feeling, to ingratiate Sybil with Mrs. Coakley, to make her play up to the tiresome old dowager.

"Good night," said Eve, and went out, smiling, with her head high in the air. She kept it high during the drive home, and it was only back in her own room that it drooped. Her husband came in and sat on the edge of a chair, going over the evening.

"I'd like that marriage of Sybil's," he said; "without forcing anything, we must do what we can to please Mrs. Coakley. She's a tremendous stockholder in the business, you know."

Eve knew; but she had forgotten, for a space, how closely the business stood at the elbow of all this festivity. She knew the names of all the stockholders and the importance of constant conciliation lest they force out her husband, who had little to contribute now either in skill or money, and yet remained nominal head of his business.

Homer Croy

When "West of the Water Tower" appeared anonymously, the literary critics sat up and took notice, which continued when Homer Croy was discovered to be the author of that startling novel. Now Mr. Croy has turned to short stories, and in an early number will be published a tale of Monte Carlo entitled

"GRANDMA AND THE GIGOLO"

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and dancing on the lawn—and
the gay crowds swing to music
under the lanterns and
the canopy of trees
—have a Camel!*



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So as you make merry with friends on this most enjoyable of nights. As you join the gay party when the work is done—taste then the kindest smoke that ever came from a cigarette.

Have a Camel!



Our highest wish, if you do not yet know and enjoy Camel quality, is that you may try them. We invite you to compare Camels with any cigarette made at any price.

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W.K. Kellogg



Takes *pep* to make that graceful flashing dive!

POISED for the plunge! Muscles tensed. Back arched high. Picture of grace and health! Glowing pep in every movement! Radiant, riotous pep!

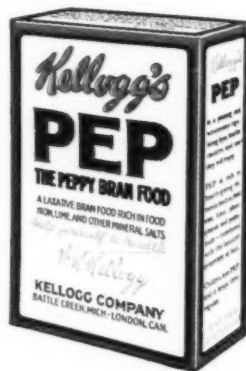
PEP is a wonder! A ready-to-eat cereal with a marvelous flavor! Fills you with glorious pep! Builds health, stamina, strength!

PEP is packed with nature's own health-bringing elements. Keeps you robust, alert, alive!

PEP is wonderfully fine for everybody. Contains bran—therefore mildly laxative. Helps stop constipation.

PEP is a real food for children. Helps make them regular. Keeps them in romping health. And they love PEP's delicious flavor!

PEP preserves the family pep. Serve it tomorrow. Your grocer has PEP!



the peppy bran food

Kellogg's
PEP

His salary stood between them and what might be actual distress—distress, at least, for people in their position. That he might retain it, she must be endlessly civil and charming—yet not too charming. Other women might flirt, intrigue, but she must be on her guard. She was guilty until proved innocent, guilty of being a mannequin and living by her beauty without other source of revenue.

Her husband rose and regarded himself in the long mirror with interest.

"Don't let Neil Waterhouse make you conspicuous, Eve," he suggested.

A bitter little grimace crossed his wife's face, but he did not see it. He was looking at himself and wondering if he did look older than he had ten years ago.

"That was a delightful wedding tonight," he said complacently. "I suppose there hasn't been a finer affair here in years. An occasion to remember."

MRS. COAKLEY sat in Eve's drawing-room some two weeks later and gazed about her, figuring out whether the room was exactly the same as when she had been in it before. Eve had ways of having the furniture shifted that were disturbing. In Mrs. Coakley's own living-room things stayed as they were put when purchased, except when the house was cleaned and servants moved them reverently. She decided that there was no new furniture. That was well, because Clyde couldn't afford new furniture. She had been checking up on Clyde since the memorable wedding, and felt that Clyde should certainly economize. If what she heard was true, he had very little above his salary, and there was no reason to doubt what she had heard. Mrs. Coakley had very reliable sources of information.

It was a handsome room, thought Mrs. Coakley. Clyde Barrows had certainly spared no expense when he had the house done over for Eve six years ago. It was wasteful, too, for those velvet curtains which his mother had used were good for a lifetime and should have been kept. She reflected secretly on the ways of women with men and their influence. Her foot tapped the thick rug. This whole business was most unfortunate, this affair of her nephew and Eve Barrows' sister.

Eve came swiftly across the room. Her dress was black, but without the heaviness and dignity of the black that Mrs. Coakley wore, and a flash of scarlet as she moved proved its daring.

"How nice of you to come in!" she said to the older woman.

"I wanted to talk to you," said Mrs. Coakley. "Clyde's well, I suppose?"

"Fine."

Mrs. Coakley nodded, and looked about her as if suspecting unseen auditors.

"Eva," she began, "I have had a talk with my nephew Stephen. In fact, I have had several talks with him. I find him—not quite reasonable."

Eve only waited, her face serene.

"He insists that he is going to marry your sister."

"Sybil is a darling. And I like Steve," answered Eve blandly.

Mrs. Coakley sucked in her cheeks until they made little whirlpools of flesh around her mouth.

"No doubt both things are true, but they hardly affect the issue. I had other ideas for Steve."

"You didn't want him to marry, you mean?"

"Eva," said Mrs. Coakley, "I think there is no use beating about the bush. I never beat about the bush. You know that I know nothing of your sister. You know that in fact we know little about you here except that you are Clyde's wife. I naturally have felt—"

But even she could not phrase that sentence of snobbery which hung on her lips, and Eve would not help her. Mrs. Coakley floundered.

"What I have come to talk about is this: I think you should be frank as I am with you. Steve is twenty-three. He threatens me with an elopement. He has been like a son to me since his mother died. I cannot let my nephew run off and be married in some village by a justice of the peace. He is a willful boy. So I have come to talk things over with you. Surely you can prevent your sister—"

"But I'm not sure I could. Sybil might be overpersuaded," said Eve softly. "Besides, what's to stop them marrying openly?"

"Well, as I say, it was not my idea for Steve. I know nothing of your family, Eva. I am fond of you—"

"My family?" asked Eve. "But of course I can tell you that. There were eight of us."

Mrs. Coakley shuddered.

"Two of the boys live on the Coast. They are doing well, I think—in a small way. One is a grocer. They are married and have children. One of my sisters is a stenographer—one is married and lives in Harlem—Sybil is here. Then I have one brother in New York who is in a real-estate office, and one who helps my father."

"Helps your father?"

"In his meat-market," said Eve coolly.

Mrs. Coakley remained calm with obvious effort.

"And your sister's business?" she asked.

"Sybil?" countered Eve. "Sybil was in Fechtman's. She sold hats in the French shop. But I don't think she intended to go back, anyway—even if she hadn't thought of marriage."

She felt curiously confident as she sat watching Mrs. Coakley, and well relieved. It had been so stupid all these six years to carry a meat-market on her conscience. But Clyde had been so fearful. He was ashamed of it. They never discussed Eve's family, and she had never told of them except in vaguenesses. Of course it had come out that she herself had been a model. She herself had told that at first, incautiously; and besides, she had been recognized by some old customers. But her family had remained shrouded in mystery until she had insisted on this visit from Sybil. She suddenly thought of them all affectionately, visualizing again the rank, damp smell of the meat-market when she used to hang about as a child hoping that her father would give her a thin disk of bologna.

"Eva," Mrs. Coakley was saying, "unless you have children of your own, you cannot realize how important marriages are to a mother. When a boy marries—and I am almost as close to Steve as if I were his mother—he usually enters the group of his wife's friends and relations. With you it has not been so, of course. But you are exceptional. Marriage is a social affair, not a matter of pure romance. The young people look after the romance, and their elders try to adjust the social background. I have been looking on at society, and active in my small way, for forty years, and I have no recollection of a happy marriage that had no social background of some sort. A marriage cannot exist in a vacuum—"

EVE started to speak, but the older woman checked her peremptorily.

"You need not misunderstand me. I have done everything in my power to persuade my nephew not to marry your sister. I think he will do as he pleases. He is—one might say—infatuated. It is my purpose to pull what I can out of this situation for him."

"I don't see what you mean," said Eve.

"Well, practically this: If this marriage is going to take place, it is better to make the

best of it, to give your sister some assistance in what she will have to meet. She has had very little experience in meeting people, I suppose."

"As you mean it—yes."

"Exactly. Well, Eva, I will do my best to help her. If she is willing to learn—"

It sounded strangely familiar to Eve. That was what Clyde used to say to her. "If you'll let me help you—just be willing to learn." She had learned, and the zest and the spirit had gone out of everything. The lesson didn't amount to anything, after all. Now she was asked to put Sybil under the tutelage of this ancient, merciless dowager who would be virtually her mother-in-law! And she knew she should rejoice at the chance. It was very complete capitulation on Mrs. Coakley's part.

"Bring your sister to see me soon, Eva—and I will leave it to you to stop this foolish talk of elopements," commanded Mrs. Coakley, rising. She gathered up her wrap majestically and went on: "I expect to see Clyde later this afternoon, and I shall drop a word in his ear. I know this will please him."

Eve looked very calm, but her mind felt trapped. Why, this woman not only wished to control her sister's happiness, but practically Eve's own finances. She was supposed to be careful—she should be grateful—the only safe thing to do for Clyde's sake was to show some appreciation. But her tongue was stubborn. She could say nothing at all, except the most mechanical of farewells, and it was not until she heard the wheels of Mrs. Coakley's car retreating from the drive that her mind unlocked.

WHAT would have been triumph a few weeks ago had turned to humiliation. She knew well enough that not so long ago she would have rejoiced at this solution for Sybil, at the chance to place her safely in what was known as a "very good" family. That was after all why she had asked Sybil to come to visit her—on this very chance. Now, with the opportunity dropped ripely into her lap, she looked at it distastefully, impatient with it and all that it meant.

Without thinking it through, she knew that she was sick of all the maneuvering, the serving, the dictating and surrendering. Being stung with the excitement of rebellion, her face lighted up, so that when she met Neil Waterhouse later, she was more alive than he had ever seen her, tingling and eager. It was not like Eve to have a rendezvous of even such a simple sort as tea at the Majestic Hotel, and every detail of it delighted her today: the solitude of the immaculate little table far away from the orchestra, the sight of Neil Waterhouse now become almost grim in his concentration upon her, and behind it all, the sense of having cleaned house mentally and tossed a lot of fears into the wastebasket.

"What is it that makes you so gay?" asked Neil. "Is it I?"

"It's Mrs. Coakley. She has been to call."

"She doesn't set me up like that."

"But today it was wonderful. I told her that my father was a butcher, and you should have seen her suffer. For she can't keep Steve from marrying my sister, and she knows it. She wants me to keep them from eloping, wants me to put Sybil under her guidance to be chaperoned and repressed and lorded over. I'm not going to. I'm going to let them elope if they want to. I'm going to suggest it—to urge it."

"She's not objecting to the marriage itself?"

"What's the use? No—she's given in on that. She just wants to run it. But I'm tired of being bossed. I'm going to show her a thing or two."

Even as she said that, Eve knew it was wrong, knew it with that expert sense of

A one-pipe smoker finds his tobacco

The problem of keeping an only pipe sweet, cool, and soothing has been solved by a Long Island haberdasher.

On the chance that a number of pipe smoking readers of this magazine may be in the same predicament that Mr. Lilienfeld found himself two years ago, we publish his letter for what it is worth:

Richmond Hill, L. I.

Larus & Bro. Co.
Richmond, Va.

Gentlemen:

I am sorry I cannot compete with the gentleman who is the proud possessor of 45 pipes of all shapes, forms and makes. I am the owner of one poor solitary pipe.

This pipe I have carried many long years. At times it has been a good pal, soothing me with its cool, mellow smoke; but at other times—Lord, how it could bite! I was at a loss to ascertain the reason why. Every time I changed the brand I would imagine that I had discovered a new find; but when another new tin was bought it was never the same.

Somehow or other I ran across Edgeworth. I believe it was recommended me at some cigar store. Since I was always ready to take a crack at anything I bought some. What a relief was the first pipeful! The old briar pipe became soothing again. Here surely was a find. I thought to myself "Will it last?" Strange or otherwise it has lasted. I have now smoked Edgeworth for the past 2 years and believe me someone will have to step some to make me switch.

Yours truly,

S. Z. Lilienfeld.

Let us send you free samples of Edgeworth so that you may put it to the pipe test. If you like the samples, you'll like

Edgeworth wherever and whenever you buy it, for it never changes in quality.

Write your name and address to Larus & Brother Company, 8 S. S. 21st Street, Richmond, Va.

We'll be grateful for the name and address of your tobacco dealer, too, if you care to add them.

Edgeworth is sold in various sizes to suit the needs and means of all purchasers.

Both Edgeworth Plug Slice and Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed are packed in small, pocket-size packages, in handsome humidor holding a pound, and also in several handy in-between sizes.

To Retail Tobacco Merchants: If your jobber cannot supply you with Edgeworth, Larus & Brother Company will gladly send you prepaid by parcel post a one- or two-dozen carton of any size of Edgeworth Plug Slice or Edgeworth Ready-Rubbed for the same price you would pay the jobber.

[On your radio—tune in on WRVA, Richmond, Va.—the Edgeworth station. Wave length 256 meters.]

fittingness to which she had drilled herself, knew that it jarred on her, and she knew it affected Neil in the same way. For he did not differ with her. He agreed with her coarsely and noisily on what they would show Mrs. Coakley—Mrs. Coakley and the world—and dragged the conversation off Steve and Sybil to himself and Eve. Into his manner crept a touch of something that had not been there before, a lack of reserve, a violence, almost, of demand. Eve tried to meet it fairly. They were approaching the climax of whatever was or would be between them, and she knew it. She could not keep him dangling now, and this afternoon he was trading a little on her defiance of Mrs. Coakley, making adventure with him the ammunition with which to fight and to pay off old scores. He became more familiar, a companion to her plot against the whole social order. Eve threw herself into the spirit of the talk which she had created, and tried to believe that she enjoyed it.

Some people came into the part of the tea-room where they sat.

"It's been done before," urged Neil. "Hundreds of women have escaped unbearable situations. All you have to do is to tell me you'll come to Chicago with me. I'm nearly done here. It will be a clean break."

"Hush!" answered Eve. "Those people will hear you."

"Let them hear me. What do we care? Let them talk."

"Please—not here."

It was hard to check Neil, since she had let him get started. She was not sure that she wanted to. But the restrictions kept bobbing up, even as she tried to mow them down with her declaration that she did not care. When Neil took her home, and in the soft snowy darkness of the evening stopped his car around the corner of the block and pulled her into his arms, she was acquiescent for only a moment. There was the quick delight of being kissed again as Clyde had used to kiss her, and as no one had since then. But a lighted limousine bore down upon them, and she drew away.

Again she said: "Please don't—not here."

"But where, then?"

"Take me home now."

"I can't stand it, Eve. I nearly go crazy when you are not with me. Let me see you again tonight."

"I'm having a dinner. How can I?"

"You must. If we're going to cut loose," he urged, "we'll have to cut loose sometime."

"I suppose I must."

"Why waste time? You don't want to be with those people. You know they aren't your kind—they have nothing in common with you—"

EVE stiffened suddenly. "I've known them a long time, though, and some of them have been kind. These people who are coming to dinner aren't so bad. It's for Sybil."

"But Sybil doesn't care—"

She found herself starting to say that it was necessary that Sybil meet these people, and stopped herself. To be sure, the world was upside down. She had turned it over herself. She meant to outlaw herself from the crowd—and glory in it. And she would. She did!

"If I'm here at ten o'clock, wont you come out and meet me? We'll go for a ride, anyway. You can break away."

"Can't you come to the house?"

"No—I can't stand that. I hate to see you in your own house. I lose the sense that you belong to me. I want to get away from everyone—just you and I—above the world."

"If I go with you," she said, "it wouldn't be easy even in Chicago. You'd be handicapped. Those things affect a man's business."

He did not deny it. He challenged the situation.

"If it does," he said, "let it. I'll get another business."

"Wont you tire of me?"

"Never."

But, she thought, Clyde had grown weary. No, not exactly weary but *accustomed*. It was a frightening thought, and she shuddered away from it.

"Will you come for a ride anyway tonight? Just step out."

"I will," she said, knowing that if she did it might be the end of things. One cannot run away from a dinner-party at which one is hostess and go riding with another man and not bring things to a head. Let them come to a head. Let the whole thing smash!

IT was unfair to her house to look as it did when she re-entered it. The rooms were lighted. Eve glanced around her with the quick glance of the mistress of an establishment. Everything was as it should be. The shimmering silk of the drawing-room curtains caught the light of the lamps, and the roses in a silver bowl on the table were softly fragrant. Eve's thoughts turned to routine, a not unpleasant routine of what the dinner was to be, the arrangement of place-cards and what dress she should wear. A clock softly chimed. She had only an hour and a half.

In her mind she knew it was unreasonable to think of arrangements for a dinner when she meant to leave that world of dinners so soon. It was preposterous. She should not care about place-cards. Yet she laid them carefully, planning the seating of her guests, for she had a reputation for being a clever hostess, and she was not impatient of her task. There was a pleasure in it related somehow to reassurance.

When she was dressed, she sought Sybil. Clyde was still in his room. He had come to be very meticulous about his appearance, as his hair was thinning, and Eve never disturbed his rites. She did not want to see him. Sybil had come in late, after Eve, and was brushing her short, shining hair, which slipped back from the brush into curls again.

"Hello," she said. "Am I late, Eve?"

"No. I wanted to see you for a minute."

"What's up?"

"Mrs. Coakley was here this afternoon."

Sybil looked around, brush suspended.

"To talk about me?"

Eve nodded.

"I know she's furious," said Sybil. "I can see it in Steve's manner. He comes from a scene with her, and he's so low and unhappy. She's been trying to stop him from marrying me, hasn't she?"

"Would you care?"

A cloud settled on Sybil's pretty face.

"I don't mean to give up Steve," she said. "I can make him happier than she can—than anyone can. But I hate to see him so worked up. He talks of running away, but he doesn't want to. He hates things like that, really. He's been trying to bring his aunt around. But," added Sybil, tipping up her chin fiercely, "he needn't on my account. I'm just as good as she is, and I'll tell her so if it comes to that."

"You don't want to run away either, do you?"

"I wont give up Steve," said Sybil. "There's no use asking me. We're going to be married, no matter how we have to do it. But I don't see, Eve, why we can't be married decently. Look at the position you have here. I can't see what that old snob objects to. Why wont she let us have a wedding like everyone else? It worries Steve. He hates underhanded things. What's she got against me, anyway?"

"Nothing," said Eve. "But don't worry, Sybil. It's going to come out all right."

She shut her sister's door gently as she left her. It was rather pleasant to think of Sybil safely there instead of in some country hotel with her lover. Yet she had meant to encourage defiance and to assist in an elopement. As she passed her husband's room, she heard him whistling gently. He was doubtless turning over in his mind the hints Mrs. Coakley had given him today at the stockholders' meeting. Everything was very secure. Clyde was happy and Sybil safe. Mrs. Coakley had capitulated. Ordered peace lay in her own hands, and she knew that at any moment she meant to drop it and see it smash. She was tired of holding it, tired of having her hands so occupied. When she dropped it, her hands would be her own again—to give to Neil Waterhouse. Excitement would flow back into her veins, empty now of everything but caution. She had a right to her excitement, to youth again, she told herself.

NONE the less she was in the drawing-room when her husband came in, waiting to receive her guests. She did not look up at Clyde as he came across the room to where she stood, but kept her eyes fixed on the fire. She knew how he came across the room, head erect, with his amateur military carriage, the faint odor of conceit about him, and waited for him to survey her as he always did.

Then suddenly she was conscious that he was standing very close to her, and as she looked up, she saw that the vanity in his eyes was overlaid by something else tonight.

"How wonderfully everything has worked out, Eve! I saw Mrs. Coakley at the stockholders' meeting. She spoke of Steve and Sybil. You're marvelous, dear. How did you ever manage it?"

"Were you so pleased?" she asked mechanically.

"Of course. Anything that makes you happy pleases me. Sybil will have a wonderful future. That big Coakley fortune goes to Steve and Lucille Coakley. It's millions."

Lucille, thought Eve. She'd forgotten Lucille, who had been designed to be Neil's wife. That was another thing she would smash, another person possibly. They said Lucille cared for Neil and made no secret of it.

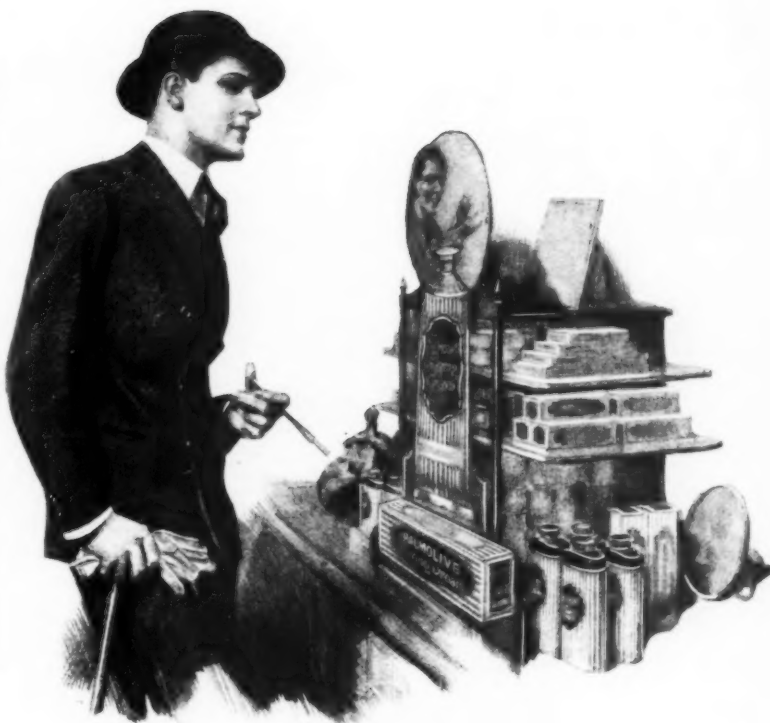
"It's wonderful, the way you've managed everything, Eve. I know it wasn't easy at first. But now, you see what it leads to," said Clyde.

She saw—only too clearly.

"And I love you," he added softly.

THERE came to Eve a swift vision of the many times he had said that, a memory of a pale, handsome, hurt young man introducing his bride to critical friends and standing by her when she was cold-shouldered. That was Clyde. He had given her the best he had, and the best he could win for her—security. She saw him advance first to meet their guests, moving with dignity and pride. It was hard to smash that pride, and Sybil's chance and all this stability that guarded people on the hard surface of her own rebellion.

The rooms filled; the guests found their places in the long dining-room. They were gay and expansive and friendly. Sybil was flushed, delighted and a center of attraction. She would be popular, thought Eve. Sybil wouldn't have to fight the same battle she herself had fought. That could be managed. At her end of the table, smiling and serene, Eve still marveled at her power over all this. The last touch of fear had gone out of her manner. She was no longer secretly apprehensive. This company was hers, and she was in control. Everything,



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she knew, led up to that meeting at ten o'clock.

They were all settled at the bridge-tables when she slipped away. It was difficult to leave, and she disliked the slyness with which she evaded attention and went swiftly to the corner. Neil was there, holding the door of the car for her, and in his quick greeting there was that touch of furtiveness which matched her own manner.

"You're a darling to come. I was so afraid you wouldn't."

Eve released herself. She stood rather fearlessly where the gleam from an arc light fell on her face.

"I'm not coming. But I wanted to tell you that I wasn't. I've changed my mind. I'm not playing with you any more at all, Neil."

He made some sort of movement and angry protest, but Eve went on, holding one still hand on his sleeve.

"I can't do it. I can't break everything."

"You weren't afraid this afternoon," he said bitterly.

ALIAS ST. ANTHONY

(Continued from page 49)

are against Carmelita, and I am so tired that I can hardly see the ball, I shall pray to San Antonio, and he will give me strength to win."

"Buena!" approved her brother. "But do not forget the strokes that I have taught. Play not as the other girls do, with the arm alone, but when you swing the racquet, put thy whole body into the drive. Play with thy heart and thy soul, *querida mia*, and think of nothing else."

"Si!" she promised, and kissing him good night, smoothed his pillow and went to her room. Old Tia Maria, who fulfilled the functions of duenna and nurse in the motherless household, came hobbling upstairs to rub the supple limbs with alcohol and assist in the saying of the litany. Again Carmelita repeated her story, and Tia Maria mumbled wisely: "The money is real enough, and that is what matters. Always saints appear to those who are young and pretty. The miracle was that this one vanished so soon."

"Perhaps he will come again. If he were not a saint, I could love—"

"No doubt," said Tia Maria, "but fix not thy heart upon it. One night of distraction is enough. How can one keep one's mind on the ball when thoughts are elsewhere? Keep your heart like the *pelota*, light and free to bound up and back and away. There are years ahead before thou thinkest of a *novio*. Turn over, so that I may rub thy back."

Carmelita pouted. "But then I shall be old, and it will be too late. Consuelo has a sweetheart, but I am watched like a prisoner. Better that I be in a convent. I must not eat; I must not drink; I must not think of love. Always must I keep supple and trained for the *jai-alai*. Always I must play, play, play—and yet it is not play."

"*Que tal!* Dost thou not want to wrest the title from that stupid cow of a Juno?"

"Si, si! That I do and no more. Unless San Antonio should require."

Tia Maria's wrinkled hands slapped at the virginal limbs. "The other night you were not so good. Tomorrow night see that you do better. The gallery is beginning to take notice. There is money and glory ahead, *angelita*."

"And I am very tired," said Pablo's sister. "Leave me, Tia Maria."

The old woman extinguished the light.

"Buenas noches, *santita*."

"Buenas noches," responded the girl sleepily. She lay there in the quiet darkness, staring up at the ceiling, and memory evoked the vision of a young St. Anthony

"Yes, I was. I'm not afraid now, though. That's why I've changed. I'm no longer frightened. It's easy when you have power. And besides, there's a loyalty—"

"And what am I to do?"

"You will marry Lucille, I suppose."

He stormed at her angrily, but then he sulked, and she knew that he was really very young. Finally, finding her obdurate, he slammed the door of his car, and she watched its red tail-light flash like a last red spot of anger down the street. She felt old as she watched it go, old and responsible and justified, and she went back to the company whose rules and restrictions she had defended, with her heart aching but at peace.

As she entered the crowded card-room and stood vaguely smiling at her guests, two women at the other end of the room spoke to each other.

"Isn't she beautiful tonight? She has such perfect poise."

"Yes," said the other; "and when you think that she was nobody at all—"

in evening dress—pale face, dark wavy hair, and strange brown eyes that seemed to light the tinder in her virgin soul. "San Antonio," she murmured, as slumber descended, "thy protection ever!"

BUT, of course, it was not the real St. Anthony who had befriended Carmelita of the curls. House managers are very careful in the matter of extending credit, and necktie privileges are only held by flesh-and-blood sports like the young Paducah Plunger, who was now pacing the floor of his lonely suite at the Almondaires.

Red—black—red—black—red—black. . . . He was the marble, and the world his wheel! Tired, tired, tired—yet he could not stop, could not relax. Pressure on his heart, pressure on his brain, pressure all around him. And in his ears the clatter of hoofs, the murmur of the mob, the flutter of cards and the clink of silver. He must escape! What was it the doctor had said about a thousand-to-one shot? Oh, yes! "Go! Go anywhere, but go tonight. Find God and Penelope!"

Just where he went, he never knew; but a sympathetic moon, silencing the sands of Marianao Beach, lighted the way for the stumbling steps of the Paducah Plunger. Bareheaded and without an overcoat, the youth who had doubled for St. Anthony lurched blindly along the surf-line of the beach, with none to witness his distress.

The first flush of dawn revealed a revolver in his hand. For a moment, the Dark Sister paused with uplifted shears. But his code saved him. With his last conscious effort he flung the weapon far into the surf, muttering: "I'm no quitter. Take that, and go on with the deal!"

Then something snapped, and illusion enveloped him. The deserted beach became a crowded ring at post time, with imaginary bookmakers clamoring for his nod. And he bet them to a standstill, bet them deaf, dumb and blind! He exhausted his credit and then emptied his pockets, hurling his possessions to the winds. Everything went—money, papers, keys, even his watch; and when the clamor of a gong proclaimed that they were off, he was still on his feet, unsmiling and undaunted, a plunging young fool who had bet his all!

Presently he turned his back on the crowded ring and sought purer air. But the blood in his veins had turned to water, and his limbs were powerless. He fell heavily, and his head struck against a timber cast up by the sea. Still in evening attire, he lay

crumpled in the sand. Dawn deepened in the eastern sky. The incoming tide crept closer to the prone figure of the Paducah Plunger. A wisp of fog, cold and treacherous, toyed idly with its unconscious prey. . . .

The full flush of morning brought old Tia Maria and little Carmelita, driving out along the beach boulevard in an ancient horse-drawn *coche*. When one is a *jai-alai* girl, certain forms of exercise are necessary. Every morning, when they came to a certain point past the Yacht Club, Pedro drew rein on his horses; and while Tia Maria bundled herself in a blanket and remained in the carriage, Carmelita got out and ran for an hour along the beach, taking deep breaths to strengthen lungs, and nimble leaps to strengthen the leg-muscles. Sometimes she took a *pelota* along and played ball with Cho-cho, smartest of water spaniels.

It was Cho-cho who discovered the unconscious figure against which the tide was softly lapping. His excited barking brought Carmelita to the scene. For a moment she was afraid to approach that inert figure; then something impelled her to drop to her knees and lift his face from the sand.

"God make me worthy!" she breathed. "It is San Antonio! He has been cast up by the sea! . . . Pedro! Pedro! Ven acá! Tia Maria! Come quickly! Cho-cho, run thou and tell them! Pronto!"

Never was there such excitement. Pedro did nothing but remove his hat and cross himself. Cho-cho barked furiously. Tia Maria was searching desperately for her police whistle. "A saint who is young and wears such clothes! The Devil has probably drowned him!"

"But he is not dead!" cried Carmelita. "I think I can hear his heart! Pedro, help me to lift him! Quickly, now. Our own house is closest. If we can but get him there, and call some one, we may yet save. I myself will warm blankets, and Maria can rub."

"*Santo cielo!*" protested the duenna. "Thou art crazy! Where are those pigs of police?"

But Carmelita had taken matters into her own hands now. Surprising strength lay in her lithe young body. Almost unaided she lifted St. Anthony into the carriage and threw a robe over him. She thrust the reins into Pedro's hands. "*Andale!*" she ordered. "Home quickly, or God may strike you dead!"

Pedro drew whip, and the horses broke into a gallop.

IT was a secluded *residencia*, very old and picturesque, set in a walled garden and replete with faded furniture and cockroaches. Native grass hid the flagstones in the patio; weeds choked the ancient fountain; mold covered the crumbling statuary. Nothing broke the lazy tropical silence save two bright-plumed parrots scolding each other from the shoulders of a marble nymph.

To this refuge they brought Kenneth Ellison, known to thousands as the Paducah Plunger; and now, by force of circumstances, alias "St. Anthony."

Pablo's doctor came at once, an excitable, dark little man with an enormous Panama hat that he employed vigorously as a fan to the general destruction of bottles and bric-a-brac. He talked much and did little. He did not believe in saints. This young *caballero* would probably die; and if he lived—who, please, was to pay the bills? Better they send for the police.

"Words of wisdom, indeed!" mumbled Tia Maria. "The Devil is behind all this. Not a scrap of paper to tell who he is—not a *centavo* in his pockets. And we are very poor. *Santita*, better thou run to the nearest telephone and report all."

But Carmelita, busy with hot applications and wine, stamped her foot at them. "What talk is this of police and money and devils? You are either wicked or very foolish. Evil

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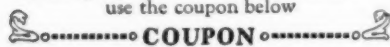
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comes not from prayer, and this one whom you say is dying, appeared to me with help when I was in need and prayed to San Antonio. I want neither *medico* nor *gendarme*! Get Padre Fernandez—he will know the truth."

An hour later Padre Fernandez, tall and calm and very wise, had aided Carmelita in bringing peace to the sick-room. He listened to her story, pursing his lips thoughtfully and elevating a quizzical eyebrow.

"In this world," he mused, "nothing is certain, *hija mia*, except that charity and innocence are jewels that adorn the wearer. God has His own ways, and all in good time the mystery will be explained. With your permission, I send another doctor, and I myself will call every day."

In the days of delirium that followed—long fever-racked days, followed by a period of torpor and dreary convalescence, not even the high dealer at Daley's would have recognized the young Paducah Plunger. His identity was a mystery, even to himself. Nor could Padre Fernandez or anyone else supply the clue. He had cast away all marks of identification, and the shifting sands of Mariano had buried their secrets.

Sometimes he really thought he was San Antonio, as Carmelita assured him, and he concluded that Paradise was rather a pleasant place. He could glimpse cool green foliage through his window, and many times a day his attending angel—the one with blue eyes and a halo of auburn curls—brought him refreshing drinks and ministered to his every need.

Then as the fever left and his strength slowly returned, the gray fog began to lift from his brain, and he realized that he was not St. Anthony. He was like a man coming out from under ether, and the effort to replace illusion with reality was painful. He would much prefer to be San Antonio forever.

CARMELITA found him in the garden one day, pulling at Cho-cho's ears. He was sitting in a chair, propped up by pillows, and there were tears in his eyes. She dropped at his side.

"*Santo mio*, thou art in pain?"

He shook his head and favored her with the first faint smile she had ever seen on his face.

"*Bueno!*" she encouraged. "Then I take thee for a drive. Come, Pedro will help, and the change will be good for thee."

At dusk they swung back through the city, and he startled her by indicating a wish that they drive through the cemetery. Just past the iron gates, young Ellison called to Pedro to stop the carriage. There was a slim granite monument immediately at their left. The Paducah Plunger indicated it with a movement of one hand.

"My mother," said he, removing his hat. "She was a Castilian. It was here that she met my father, and it was here that she desired to be buried."

He said no more, but replaced his hat, and signaled to Pedro to drive on.

Carmelita knew then what she had long suspected. He was not San Antonio! The color flamed into her cheeks.

On the way home he began to talk of his boyhood in Paducah, Kentucky. He spoke in a curious, meditative monotone, as though to himself, and it sounded to her like Padre Fernandez chanting the requiem over the coffin of one who was gone. It was not the story of the Paducah Plunger but of young Kenneth Ellison before he became a lonely knight errant in the field of fortune. He spoke neither of the present nor the future. To him there seemed to be no present and no future; no hopes, no interests and no desires—nothing but lethargy of body and apathy of mind. That was what puzzled Carmelita of the curls. She longed to light the fire in those strange brown eyes, to bring

a smile to those sensitive lips, to restore to St. Anthony the *something* he had lost.

Taking her cue from him, she spoke of her own childhood and of her parents, buried in Madrid. She told of Pablo, so great a *jai-alai* player that always two men were placed against him in the singles. She had practiced with Pablo, from the age of five, but of her own prowess she said but little. Tia Maria had once told her that in America, goal of all hopes, men risked huge sums upon horses and cards and dice, but it was not the custom to bet upon girls who wore medals of the Virgin around their throats, and who cried their hearts out when they failed to win.

It was the first of many rides that they enjoyed together, usually in the early morning, so that Carmelita might run along the sands, fleet-limbed as a fawn, the while old Tia Maria and Kenneth Ellison watched her from afar. The dilapidated *coche* had given place now to a luxurious car, for the young plunger had recovered himself sufficiently to cable his banker, and there were now unheard-of luxuries in the hitherto humble household. This was just as well, since little Carmelita had until then been supporting them all from her earnings on the *jai-alai* courts. Pablo's lungs required that he be removed to a sanitarium in the dry belt of the interior. This meant heavy weekly payments which she met secretly and with courage. There were other problems, not so easy to solve. Only Padre Fernandez guessed how great a strain was descending on the small shoulders of Carmelita of the curls.

Never had she breathed to "*Kenny mio*"—as she now called St. Anthony—a word concerning the profession by which half of Havana now identified her. Never had she mentioned the name of José Guardo, the Black Pearl of the city's underworld—Guardo, who wagered thousands nightly in the Fronton and rewarded liberally such girls as did his bidding.

Nor had she confided to anyone that a mysterious young invalid American formed part of her household. Every instinct of her romantic blood bade her treasure this secret. He had come to her in the guise of a saint, and never had she quite got over the idea that some day he would vanish in a cloud of incense and to the accompaniment of angel voices.

SLOWLY and inevitably the net of professionalism was closing upon this child of the *jai-alai* courts, dragging her into the mire of the betting-ring; but while there was yet time, she could escape for a morning or an occasional day, and ride with the silent, dreamy-eyed Paducah Plunger out to the Bellamar Caves or to the lovely hermitage at Monserrat. At such times she was a joyous child, seeing beauty in everything; and he, viewing the world for the first time through the eyes of youth, remained silent and preoccupied, and she could never read his thoughts. Nevertheless she was happy, aware dimly that she was not displeasing to him, aware that he was looking with more interest each day at the cerulean sky, the green landscape and all the loveliness of the Cuban countryside.

Small wonder that she was inspired to play so gallantly on the courts of the Fronton, that the night came when she defeated the great Juno Carrera, and twenty cashiers were kept busy paying off, while the gallery shrieked: "*Favorita mia! Brava, Carmelita! Viva la Reina! Viva la Santa Blanca!*"

How proud she was that night, and how happy! If only he had been there to witness her triumph! Surely St. Anthony would have understood then! She poured out her heart to old Tia Maria, and the latter wept over the tired, perspiring little body stretched before her on the rubbing-table.

"Perhaps he will honor us now, *santita*

mial! Now that thou art queen of the world! All in good time everything comes. Take deep breaths, little angel, and the heart will quiet down. *Vágame Dios*, never was there such a night or such a miracle as thou!"

TRULY, as Padre Fernandez put it, God has his own ways! A serpent intruded on this Garden of Eden. Señor Guardo gave a dinner at the Inglaterra in honor of the new champion, and because all the other girls were of a mind to go, Carmelita could find no excuse for not attending. The Black Pearl was very liberal with his gifts, and very drunk. He drew the little *santa blanca* aside and said things that were unworthy of a host. Her protests inflamed him.

"What child's talk is this? It is not wise, *querida mia*, to exchange old friends for new. You forget that it was I who brought you and Pablo to this country, and there is both a cause for importing and a reason for deporting. Little saints do not entertain *amigos* in their homes. Oh! So you think I do not know who has taken my place in your affections? You think I do not know of this young *Americano*?"

Carmelita's eyes flashed. She drew herself up.

"What I care? There is no wrong, as Padre Fernandez can testify. God has sent this friend to me, and now it is the foul fiend himself who has crossed my path with such as you. I tell you now, Señor Guardo, rather than be the tool for thy money and those who sit with thee in the boxes at the Fronton, I never play again. Rather by far, I do that which has been long in my heart and enter a convent. And now, please, I desire to leave."

"*Bueno*," said Guardo. "The convent is a very good idea. 'Cause why, you ask? Well, I tell you. Habana will not be good place for you. I have influence here, as you will discover. And you will not be the *favorita* at the Fronton very long, because I shall bring some one from Madrid who is far better than you. I shall bring Elena Avila, champion of them all!"

It was a very tired and depressed little Carmelita who went home that night and said her prayers to Whoever it was that guided the destinies of *jai-alai* girls.

"*Dios mio!*" she reflected. "Perhaps it is just as well if I do take the veil. The men who are good are always ill, and those who are well are always bad. It is a strange world!"

She was really very tired of the *jai-alai* courts. Her small feet and slender limbs ached from continual exertion on the stone floor. The blue eyes were strained from watching the flying ball under the brilliant glare of arc lights. Her ears rang to the blare of the band in the gallery and the cries of the money-takers. "*Ciento blancos! . . . Cien azules!*" A hundred on the whites! A hundred on the blues!

Now that she was champion, she suffered all of the tribulations and worries that beset the successful. Young gallants waited for her at the exits, and temptations were numerous. Less fortunate girls made her the victim of their petty spite and jealousy. The poorer classes adored her, and whenever she appeared on the courts, the gallery made her an overwhelming favorite in the betting. Thus she carried the investments of the poor, and it added to her sense of responsibility. She had to win; and yet her small frame was not meant to suffer too much exertion. If only *Kenny mio*—her San Antonio—would indicate what it was he thought of during the silent moments that he held her hand! Ah, perhaps after all, the convent was intended from the first!

IT was old Doctor Ballantyne who brought matters to a head. The corpulent man of medicine arrived in Havana one day on the



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Canitic Coloration



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A gray hair as colored by a coating dye. Notice the crust around the outside—how different from the method of nature.



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trail of his patient. He was commissioned to make the trip by young Ellison's father, who had reached that stage in life when he desired nothing so much as the return of the prodigal son. The fatted calf awaited him in Paducah.

Ballantyne's India-rubber face underwent amazing contortions as he sat with Kenneth Ellison in the green patio of the house by the sea and tried to figure out what had happened to the Paducah Plunger. Why, the boy was dead, and didn't know it; a dazed automaton, possessing neither volition nor desire. The human watch had run down, and some method must be devised to set the delicate mechanism ticking again. The physician frowned.

"Now, look here, Kenny, you can't stay here forever."

Ellison tugged at Cho-cho's ears. "No," he sighed, "I suppose not. I don't suppose I can do anything any more, and the funny part of it is, I don't seem to care."

"H'm," said the physician, "that's bad! You've got youth, and you've got money. Davidson tells me he transferred fifty thousand to your account here. Haven't shot it away, have you?"

Ellison shook his head. "Luck's still tired, Doc. Only made one bet since I saw you last, and St. Anthony copped that."

"St. Anthony? H'm! I never met the gentleman, Kenny. I think you'd better let me take you to a hotel."

"No," said Ellison. "There's room here for you, and I want you to meet my friends."

NOT until the following morning did Ballantyne encounter Tia Maria and little Carmelita. Meantime he had been compelled to suffer the discomforts of an ancient, lumpy bed that collapsed under him in the middle of the night, and he had battled with an unbelievable number of mosquitoes and roaches, so that he was not in the best of humor, nor disposed to make light of the importance of his mission.

Carmelita's heart stood still. It was as she had feared all along. San Antonio was going back to his own people, to that paradise of a Kentucky of which he had so often spoken. She smiled bravely at the physician.

"Whatever is best for Kenny must be done. And surely thou must know. But if it pleases thee to walk with me alone for a minute in the garden, there are things you could say that I might ever wish to treasure. This Señor Ellison—he has a home and padre, you say? Then perhaps there is also a—girl?"

"There was a girl," said Ballantyne, frowning, "but—"

Carmelita interrupted. "Ah, the Penelope of whom he speaks so much. The one who put flowers in her hair and on her mouth the kisses. Is she ver' beautiful?"

Ballantyne's face folded into the lines of a pop-eyed gargoyle. "Penelope?" he wheezed. "Penelope? Well, good Lord—"

"Si," confirmed Carmelita. "God and Penelope! That is what Kenny murmur many times when we are driving to the Yumuri Valley where the blue sky bends down to meet the palm trees. Always I forbear to question, because he is very dreamy when he talk like that. Now, I know why. It is because his Penelope is calling him."

Ballantyne looked at her over his glasses. "I think you're right," said he. "You've hit it! Penelope is calling him."

"He should go to her," said Carmelita. "I too have a call, and I see now that it must be obeyed. Very soon, señor, I wear the veil of a novice nun and be very happy."

Again Ballantyne's astonishing features underwent a metamorphosis. "Great Jupiter!" he protested. "This is too deep for me! Señorita, let us walk a little farther, and suppose you tell me the whole story. Our young friend in there is about as communicative as a clam."

The story took long in the telling, and at its conclusion, the little *santa blanca* looked up wistfully at her audience of one.

"There is but one thing more, a great favor to me, señor. *Kenny mio* has never seen me play the *jai-alai*; yet I have no other claim to distinction. Because of him, I have become the *favorita* of Habana; yet I have looked for his face at the Fronton in vain. He is strong now, and if what you say is true, the excitement may help."

Ballantyne's eyes lighted. "I believe it would. He needs something to snap him out of his lethargy. I saw a game in Mexico City once. Two spectators dropped dead. But they were not Kenny's type of gambler. They were built more like me. I didn't know girls played the game."

"Si, señor, some of us are trained for nothing else. We play, not with the basket glove as do the men, but with racquets, and it is equally fast and dangerous, as you shall see. *Mira, amigo mio*, I had resolved to play no more, because a man whom I have offended mortally has brought the great Elena Avila here to shame me before the crowd. But if you will bring *Kenny mio* to the game, then I shall risk all. Once he wagered three thousand pesos for me. Let him do so again, and I care not who they put against me. I tell you now, that if San Antonio is watching, I shall win!"

She had become excited, and she spoke with so much passion that Ballantyne removed his hat and mopped the perspiration from his forehead. "Whew!" he ejaculated. "I shall probably need a doctor myself before I get through with this. Well, Carmelita, your wish is granted. On with the game, and I'll guarantee the personal appearance of young St. Anthony of Paducah."

WHAT a setting for the final act of a play! Night in the Fronton. Outside, a thunderstorm was raging—bolts of blue lightning, and the rain falling in sheets. And inside the pavilion—pandemonium! Packed to the doors and the roof with perspiring humanity. Cuban blood at fever heat. Over the clamor of the crowd the strains of a brass band high in the gallery playing the stirring *danzon*. Dry gourds rubbing together with a sandpaper *swish-swish* effect that is like the persistent beat of a tom-tom. Pool-sellers, identified by red-tasseled caps, shouting frantically the ever-changing odds, and fighting their way through the crowd as though they were brokers and it was Black Friday on the Stock Exchange.

Imagine, if you will, a huge electric-lighted handball court, inclosed on three sides, the other open to spectators who are massed in boxes, bleachers and an overhead gallery. Tennis played against three walls, with a ball that is driven like a bullet, hard and dangerous. The roar of a fight crowd, the clamor of a bull-ring; the girls—virginal girls, with the proud hot blood of the Dons in their veins—battling for fame and fortune, while a great scoreboard with an electric gong heralded every switch of the odds! Imagine Wills against Lenglen in a professional match with the score tied, the deciding set on, and twenty bookmakers shouting: "Even money and take your pick! Come on, boys, who wants Helen? Any amount!"

Would they get action? *Seguramente! Caramba, yes!*

The situation was much the same, for the preliminary games were over, and little Carmelita of the curls was about to take the court against the great Elena of Madrid.

Old Tia Maria, shaking with excitement, made her way to the private box in the gallery reserved for Carmelita's guests. She whispered in Ballantyne's ear: "Patience, and one last word from the child of my heart. She is playing for him, *comprende Vd.*? But he is to make no bets, not one *centavo*, until she gives the signal. It will come at some point of the game and when least expected.

She will stop to relace her shoe. He is then to do as he pleases. Remember, señor, not one *centavo* until Carmelita bends down to tie her shoe. *Adios*, and may the saints hear our prayers!"

AN outburst of shouts and handclapping heralded the appearance of the players. Ballantyne, perspiring profusely and apparently on the verge of apoplexy, laid a quivering hand on his companion's arm. "Don't get too excited, Kenny," he pleaded. "Not too excited, my boy. Keep calm! Great jumping Jupiter, I wish this was over!"

The young Paducah Plunger said no word, but leaned forward with his arms on the balcony railing, and his brown eyes intent on the scene below. Elena was the first to appear, a smiling, dark-haired Amazon—a full-blown Spanish beauty. The crowd gave her the welcome that befits a champion. Then came the *favorita* of Havana, the little *santa blanca*—Carmelita of the curls. Clad in white silk, with loose blouse and short accordion-pleated skirt, she looked like a child—a feminine David against a matronly Goliath. They practiced for a few minutes, running lightly over the court and volleying back and forth. Then Carmelita yielded the floor to her opponent, and leaning coolly against the wall, adjusted the leather straps on her wrists and waited for the referee to toss the coin that would decide the opening service. Elena won the toss, and presently the game was on.

In all that mixed assemblage, packed under the roof of the Fronton on a hot Cuban night, there were two men particularly on whom Destiny centered its attention. Each was a gambler, but in code and temperament as far apart as the poles.

The Black Pearl, surrounded by his favorite clique, occupied a box directly below Ellison. Guardo had dined not wisely but too well. This was his hour of satisfaction. He was drunk not only with wine but with the favor of a new inamorata who was here for the double purpose of humbling the little *santa blanca* and at the same time adding much wealth to the coffers of Señor Guardo. Truly it was his night, and he perceived from the scoreboard that everything was going well.

"Viva Elena!" he shouted. "This way, *caballeros*, with your bets! I take all the damn' Carmelita money in the house!"

SOMETHING was wrong with the little white angel of the *jai-alai* courts. She was apparently off her game. Either that, or Elena was by far the better player of the two. The older girl revealed all the assurance of a champion, and she was playing brilliantly and with almost mechanical precision. Carmelita, on the other hand, was erratic and uncertain. Twice she stumbled going after the ball, missed, and then buried her face in her arm, leaning against the back wall, while the crowd jeered. The betting, which had opened at even money, began to reflect the figures on the scoreboard. They were playing a thirty-point game, and Elena was now leading, ten to four. It looked like a safe margin for a champion. Up shot the odds as the commissioners clamored for Carmelita money. "Four to one Santa Blanca! Five to one! Six! Seven!"

Elena scored three more points in rapid succession, and the clamor redoubled. Cheers for the champion, and derisive hoots for the former favorite of Havana. It was those mocking yells from Guardo's followers that brought the first flush of color to the pale cheeks of St. Anthony. The young Paducah Plunger stood up.

Ballantyne tugged futilely at his companion's coat tails. "Sit down! Sit down! Great snakes, don't start anything. Not in here—we'll get murdered! Keep calm, you imbecile!"



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Ellison seemed not to hear. He beckoned to a commissioner, another, and still another. Six of them came running upstairs to learn his will.

Until that moment the young Kentuckian had said no word but had sat there silently, reacting mentally to the echo of old emotions, and with his eyes fixed upon the fleeting figure of Elena's opponent. Was this the laughing, star-eyed little lady who had ridden at his side through the lovely valley of the Yumuri? He had thought of her only as a child, blissfully unconscious of the earth's realities. Yet here she was, as much of a tool of the sporting realm as he—a moth fluttering in the web, and a game little moth, asking no quarter from anyone! He saw the strain of battle form its fighting lines on the delicate features, caught the expression on her face, the mask of the professional, and he knew there was a bond between them. She was giving her all! She was a *sport* too! The revelation added its crowning touch to the magic of the night. The Paducah Plunger was himself again.

The pool-sellers assailed him vociferously. "*Que quiere Vd., señor?*"

He opened his wallet and handed out six twenty-dollar bills. His terse instructions were given in Spanish. "Put that money in your pockets, and for the balance of the night you work for me. Five thousand dollars goes for my little friend in white, and every nod of my head means a hundred more. Now go to it!"

SANTA MARIA and the angels—what a lunatic American! The riot was on! They went clattering down the stairs, heading pell-mell for the main floor and shouting as they went. And it was at this precise moment, with the score standing twenty-two to twelve against her, and the Black Pearl vainly offering odds of ten to one on Elena, that little Carmelita laid aside her racquet, signaled to the referee, and bending down, began calmly to adjust the ribbons on her shoe!

She seemed to be having difficulty with those rebellious ribbons, at least sufficient difficulty to allow a period of time during which there was plenty of opportunity to take advantage of the tempting odds that were being offered by the Black Pearl. Only Tia Maria knows how many of the little *santa blanca's* friends among the very poor were also watching for that signal. It was her last opportunity to reward a faithful following.

The lid was now ripped off Bedlam. For a moment no one knew what had happened, except that a battery of red-capped commissioners were now standing in front of Guardo's operators and clamoring for Elena money. It came to them in a flood, and still they asked for more. The thing was unbelievable! The Black Pearl stood up, faced around and recognized the figure of Ellison. The young Plunger was standing by the box rail where all eyes could see the slight nod and gesture of the hand by which he directed the operations of his agents. He was the only calm man in the house.

With a thrill of pride, the *favorita* of Havana identified the figure of San Antonio

and interpreted correctly the shouting of the commissioners. She drew a deep breath, and nodded to the referee.

ELENA resumed her brilliant attack, but she faced a far different opponent now. In five minutes the Fronton was a madhouse. It was apparent that the little *santa blanca* had trapped her enemies; she had been holding herself in reserve. It was an old trick of the *jai-alai*, but to attempt it against a champion! That was the inconceivable part of it. Guardo called for more liquor. He doubled his bets, standing up and shouting at the silent figure in the upper box. He was thinking of that message in code from Mike Kalisch, night manager at Daley's. A *loco Americano* ready to be "taken." *Bueno, gracias a Mike!*

"Two t'ousand more Elena," shouted the Black Pearl. "You, señor—you and I—we make this damn' thing worth while! Or perhaps you like to quit?"

The only indication that Ellison had heard the challenge was a gesture of his hand which sent the commissioners toward Guardo in a foaming wave. Not once did the Paducah Plunger look at the scoreboard. It is a question whether he knew or cared how matters stood. It was not a question of money with him. His eyes were on a little white whirlwind, an angel with blue eyes and auburn curls, flashing over the court in a miracle of fervor. Carmelita was cutting loose! None had ever seen her play like that before! She was another Pablo the Perfect, here, there and everywhere! The rallies grew fiercer and more protracted, and Carmelita, whirling backhanded, scored point after point, driving the *pelota* with terrific force low and into the far corners.

It was too much for Cuban blood! Temperature mounted with the score until delirium came, and individually they lost their heads, all except San Antonio, standing in the gallery, and little Carmelita, playing her heart out on the floor below.

Truly, luck is an amazing thing. The "breaks of the game" went against Carmelita. Balls bounded badly, and twice the umpires ruled against her on a disputed point. The score was now twenty-nine to twenty-seven in favor of Elena, and by that token the *favorita* of Havana knew that she had drawn her game too fine. She had not reckoned on those adverse decisions. A single slip now, and her Kenny would be ruined! Worse still, the man she hated would triumph over the one she loved. San Antonio would go back to his Penelope in that marvelous Kentucky and never would he think of Carmelita except in terms of disappointment.

"*Santo Dios!*" she breathed. "Let me but win now, and never shall I play again. This be my vow!"

Elena faulted twice in her service, and then Carmelita scored again. Gongs sounded, and the huge board now read twenty-nine to twenty-nine. Only one more point to make, and the next rally would decide it.

ONLY little Carmelita guessed the amazing nature of the climax now at hand. Guardo's box was not more than twenty feet from the side-lines, and she saw his features, inflamed with liquor and hideous. For an instant cold fear paralyzed her limbs. Then Elena served, and Carmelita sprang into action. Nothing should stop her now! Nine times she raced the length of the court, retrieving the ball with deadly accuracy. Then Elena risked all on an overhand shot that drove the *pelota* far back and toward the side-lines. A swish of short skirts, and Carmelita was after it. For the fraction of a second her face was toward Guardo, and she saw him half rise from his seat with something in his hand that glittered. Then her eyes went to the ball,

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GERALD BEAUMONT

and at the same instant there came from Guardo's box a spurt of flame, a puff of smoke, and—*bang!*

The shot seared her shoulder, spun her around. She caught herself desperately, raised the racquet, and saw the ball as through a mist.

"San Antonio!" she shrieked, and swung with all her strength. Straight and true as a bullet, the ball reached its mark, low and in the far corner, where not even a champion could retrieve it. Up rose the crowd, and down dropped little Carmelita, winner of the night!

There was a second shot, but few heard it. Guardo turned the weapon on himself, which was just as well, since the young Paducah Plunger had gained the main floor in a single leap, and twenty policemen could not hold him. *Madre de Dios*, what a night!

TIA MARIA was right. The saints appear always to favor the young and fair; nor do they bother much with the plans of fat physicians and kindly Mother Superiors. Dr. Ballantyne fulfilled his mission faithfully. He took Kenneth Ellison home. And little Carmelita, with her arm in a sling, assumed the veil of a novice.

Bueno! The hot summer passed, and again it was winter. Once more the birds were flying south. The little novice was interrupted at her prayers by Sister Rosita, who had had her suspicions from the first. "*Hija mia*, dry thy blue eyes and pray no more today. There is some one who awaits thee by the statue in the patio. I have arranged that you shall be undisturbed. *Vágate Dios!*"

She went obediently and with much wonder. Halfway to the arbor she stopped and put both hands to her breast. Standing by the statue of San Antonio, hat in hand, was the young Paducah Plunger, and she had but to look into his eyes to know why he had come. The color in her delicate face came and went, and her pulses throbbed. She greeted him shyly, timidly, and spoke again of the vow she had taken in the Fronton never to follow her profession again.

He nodded his comprehension. "I too made a promise," he told her. "That night was the last appearance of a plunger. I shall never bet again. It cost me too much, *santita mia*. The loss has been a little more than I can bear."

"Loss?" her eyes widened. "Kenny *mio*, I do not understand! What did you lose, and how?"

"*Mi corazon*," he answered, touching his breast. "I lost my heart, little angel, and how completely you will never know. That's the way with a plunger, my dear. I'm down to the cloth at last."

"But this—this Penelope—"

He smiled down at her. "That was but a dream name, little lady. In thee I found both God and my Penelope, and now you know what I have lost."

There was a long silence, broken finally by the voice of Carmelita. "If thou hast lost something, the thing to do is to pray to San Antonio that it be returned. *Mira*, there is the statue! Do thou stand there a moment and ask of him the favor that you seek."

Bareheaded, the young Paducah Plunger turned to the statue of St. Anthony, with whom his destiny seemed linked. Carmelita watched him a moment; then her hands removed the veil of the novice. From a near-by bush she plucked three flowers and thrust them in her curls. She stole forward and took Ellison by the hand.

"Kenny *mio*," she whispered. "I think San Antonio has heard your prayers. Penelope awaits thee. See, there are rosebuds in my hair—bend down, beloved, and thou wilt find the kisses waiting on my lips."

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HOUND BAIT

(Continued from page 79)

rocks did their worst with the little car. The first interruption came when the coursing hounds, which George had inadvertently left tied together with the sash-cord, happened to take opposite sides of a tree in the darkness. The resulting misunderstanding between them threatened to sever a long and beautiful friendship. Five precious minutes were lost while the ubiquitous George discovered and rectified his error—minutes in which the speeding Slewfoot made an even greater mistake—two of them, in fact.

Misled by the vast increase in the clamor of the dogs when they started civil war, he felt that he was rapidly losing out in the race. His anguished lungs wheezed and whispered to him that he had covered fully nine miles already. Arithmetic suggested that the swamp he sought had been overrun by some six miles in his haste. And there was no encouragement in mathematics on that basis. He had heard that running water would destroy the scent of a fugitive and give respite in such cases; but the only thing running in his vicinity was himself. Casting about in desperation for a tree that he was convinced he was presently going to need even as the flowers need the dew, he saw a cabin ahead. But he was entirely too busy taking up his feet and putting them down again in fresh places to bother with any details of ownership or locality. Later he wished that he had been more observant. Just now his mind was wholly on travel.

LIKE an army in full rout, Slewfoot galloped to the door of the cabin in the woods, still unaware that the fire was in no way preferable to the frying-pan. All he gathered from a hasty and superficial examination was the probability that colored folks lived there. And he knew that the race had a fixed policy with reference to refugees from the white folks. The baying of the Sheriff's hounds was sounding nearer and nearer now. Sam knocked, rattled the latch, and yelled all at the same time. The door opened suddenly under his attack, and he catapulted into the fireside circle of his recent wife—and Steamboat.

On the gentlemen's part recognition was mutual and fearful—action instantaneous and simultaneous. Sam left by the window, taking the sash with him. The redoubtable Steamboat used the door, which was nearer, and open.

"Whut ail dem niggers?" exclaimed the doubly deserted wife querulously in her sudden new loneliness. Echo answered nothing, being confused with the bewilderment of the hounds over a large negro passing them rapidly and in the wrong direction. But at length they settled upon their original course as best. This, however, only further perplexed the bereft woman, as it lay straight through her house and out the window through which Slewfoot had so recently and hastily passed. All of which is some explanation and extenuation for a fat negro woman

going out under the stars and climbing a tree. There she audibly thanked her God for her rare judgment in so doing, since the fleeing Steamboat had now come upon the rear-guard of town dogs, which were still giving valiant tongue at a distance behind the official dogs of the Sheriff. Even at half a mile the tree-dweller could hear above all else the squalls of Steamboat for his Lord to have mercy upon him, as he and the pack passed swiftly, and in full cry, from further ken.

WHILE the whole county seemed literally ringing with the barking and baying of dogs, the sputtering and grinding of cars, the buzzing and tinkling of farmers' telephones, the Sheriff's increasing worries acquired a fresh layer. Bad enough was the uproar and county-wide pandemonium that must render impossible of concealment from the county chairman the fact of the night's escapade. But worse still was a horrible conviction growing up in the official mind that an important note was now missing from the general bedlam. Until recently, through all and above all could be heard the ceaseless shouts of the master of hounds. The indefatigable George had been perspiring in rivers, whooping afoot over hill and dale in his efforts to inspire and strengthen his charges. But no longer now was the hunter heard on the hill. The awful realization was settling down upon the Sheriff that he was probably minus any real knowledge of the whereabouts of Slewfoot and two county dogs. And cheerless indeed without them would the morrow be. A reckoning thus would be dismal beyond description.

At length the Sheriff's woe became too great for silence. "Jim, what in hell'll we do if we've lost that nigger and them dawgs?" he besought his assistant in a high-keyed voice of anguish.

"What in hell can we do?" answered the other bitterly. "If this night ever ends, just remember it was *your* bright idea—not mine. I was content and willin' to let sleepin' dawgs lie. It was *you* that must 'put a keen edge' on them hounds. It was *you* that spent an hour scarin' Slewfoot into runnin' away."

"Aw, shut up, Jim! You aint lost any more money'n I have."

"Now, and I aint lost as *many* dawgs as you—not to speak of Slewfoot—and offices," retorted the deputy, slowing the car, then stalling it in his excitement.

The last word was electric in its effect upon the Sheriff. It recalled anew county chairmen, politics, and the absolute necessity and forlorn hope of having Sam and the hounds safe in jail again ere dawn.

"Come on, Jim," urged the Sheriff desperately. "Get out and twist 'er tail there. George may have a line on 'em again by now."

"All the line George ever had on them dawgs," responded the deputy viciously as he cranked, "was a plow-line. Wisht I had—it—around his—fool neck!"

Michael Arlen

All the recent stories by the internationally famous author of "The Green Hat" have appeared in the pages of this magazine. A new group will be inaugurated in an early issue, bearing the quaint title:

"WHY MEN
BELONG TO CLUBS"

AGAIN the motor spluttered and spun. Gears clashed and groaned. Once more the law was upon the wind. At intervals, as the distance from the recent storm-center increased, the Sheriff let the engine die, that only the sound of the boiling water in the radiator might come between them and the silence in which he hoped to hear something that might indicate the location of Sam and the pursuing hounds. But only the puffing of a freight-train on a far-off grade broke the comparative stillness now.

On and on—until hearing nothing grew more exasperating to the Sheriff than hearing too much had been before. Less and

less was he in the mood to receive the crowning blow, the final straw, the end of hope—which was when he came upon George once more. For the master of hounds was curled up in a fence-corner, after the manner of his race, sound asleep. The sight of one so lost to human feelings and anxieties while his master was in such agony of spirit over the probable total loss of a prisoner, two hounds and a good job incensed the Sheriff uncontrollably. He descended from his machine and fell to throwing rocks at the unfortunate George at close range and in a most unsportsmanlike manner.

Under this bombardment George speedily sat up and rubbed his eyes aggrievedly.

"What the devil're you doin' sleepin' there, and me in such trouble?" bellowed the outraged official. "Where are the dogs? Where's Sam?"

"Ouch! Lemme 'lone, Cap'n Clem. Don't th'ow no mo' dem rocks, please suh! I aint know, suh!" returned George hurriedly.

"Well, give me some language, then. Talk befo' I start shootin'!"

"'Clar' to goodness, Cap'n, I aint know," protested George vigorously. "Last I heard of dem dawgs, dey barkin' along, like. I jes' sort of shet my eyes li'l minute. And den you comes up, and I opens 'em. Aint heah no dawgs right now, suh."

"No, you don't. And we don't, neither. But you find them dawgs and have 'em home befo' breakfast, or I'll fire you out of that jail!"

"Yes suh! Sho will, suh! . . . Heah, pups! Heah, pups! Heah—" And George was gone, shouting hopefully ahead in the darkness of the road. But only the faint echoes of the freight in the distance answered him.

THE sun rose. Weaving through the slow, townward-straggling procession of farmers in miscellaneous vehicles chugged High Sheriff Hilton and his able deputy. Defeat was writ large upon them. Sheriff Clem humped wearily over his steering-wheel. Scarcely less weary was Deputy Jim; yet his attitude was the galling one of a sympathetic but disinterested bystander. "For five cents I'd say 'I told you so,'" he tactfully remarked to his superior.

"For two cents, if you did, I'd knock your durned block off," snapped the other.

Thus amiably they rode, mile after mile.

At the jail door George, who had arrived earlier and by mysterious means of his own, met them. "Aint seed no mo' dem dawgs—nor Sam, Cap'n," he explained cautiously. "Go to the devil!" the Sheriff requested him savagely.

"Yes suh. Better lemme git yo'sef li'l cawfee and breakfas', suh. Sho make you feel better. I 'spect dem dawgs be home soon now—and Sam."

But George was no better prophet than houndmaster. Two days passed. The mystery of the complete disappearance deepened. Careful and discreet inquiries brought nothing but baseless rumors. Sheriff Clem burned gallons of valuable gasoline hurrying hither and yon in the county to inspect dogs that were reported to him as his missing hounds. Airedales, terriers, curs, and rabbit-dogs of rare powers the Sheriff examined in his quest. Ever he was led forth hoping, but always the journey ended in disappointment. And his return was usually further embittered by finding the jail porch decorated with a farmer or two from remote sections who had brought in some scared country ducky at the point of a shotgun under the impression that they had the missing Slew-foot.

Indeed, the only bright spot in the Sheriff's current life was learning that Chairman Worley had been absent for some days in the adjoining county. And even this was dulled by the knowledge that the reckoning was only postponed. Always the air of

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RECREATION should have an object which, when realized, will render life more enjoyable; gild succeeding years with new beauty; drape the walls of memory with rich tapestries woven by the loom of time and travel. It is not enough to read about the world. We should see it face to face, look into the heart of things, ponder upon the immensity of the universe and the profound nature of its greatest mysteries—the Life and the Faith of Mankind.

the courthouse square now was taut with a feverish speculation as to what the county chairman would do to Clem Hilton upon his return. It was whispered that word had been variously borne to him by enemies of the Sheriff that party and prison discipline had relaxed in the Genesee jail, that Sheriff Clem had participated in a wholesale jail delivery, that he had sold the county's dogs to buy rum.

And back from the near-by county came word, equally magnified and distorted, as to what steps the chairman would take when he reached home once more. Therefore in the intervals between tearing his hair and tearing over the county roads in the explosion of further baseless rumors, Sheriff Clem sat moodily upon his favorite perch, the high front veranda of the jail. Sheriffing, he reflected at such times, was not what it once was. He fingered his star and sighed miserably. The injustice of things depressed him. He had only striven to do the county a good turn, to restore its manhunters to their pristine splendor and keenness of scent and spirit. And in so doing he had accomplished nothing but his own downfall.

ON the third day Sheriff Hilton began to wear a path in the floor of the porch as he paced it. On the morrow the chairman would return. The nerves of the Sheriff were ragged and raw. All hope of final escape from his predicament was gone. Gone, too, were the dogs; gone was Sam; going was his tenure of office. A request had even come from the fishy-eyed chairman to call upon him in the morning.

As the afternoon waned and merged into twilight, the Sheriff sat at his desk, chewing his pen and meditating upon the ingratitude of republics, States—and counties. His resignation was not only in order but in production. Its composition burdened him. Yet it was a document that he felt must be peculiarly his own. The first draft of it lay before him, ready for final copying.

"Jim, is there a 'k' in 'accept'?" he inquired dejectedly.

But he never heard—nor needed—the reply. For in the darkened doorway leading to the jail corridor appeared George, unmistakably inflated to bursting with tidings. George had scooped all other news-gathering agencies, it was evident, and he was as cheery over it as his brethren of the Fourth Estate.

"Cap'n Clem! Aw, Cap'n Clem!" he whispered hoarsely. "C'm heah, quick, please suh!"

"Not a cent," replied the Sheriff firmly.

"Not a durned cent—"

"Naw suh; 'tain't dat," explained George. "Dis heah's impawtant. I's got message fo' you."

"Well, if you've got it, aint much to it. But spit it out."

"Hit from Sam, suh—"

The Sheriff, figuratively, hit the ceiling.

SILVER MOUNTED

(Continued from page 67)

crippled from a fall. There was only one thing for me to do; I fogged in on my bunch and took 'em as fast as I could. Halfways in, I could see the dust of other bunches being brought in by other riders, and I turned my bunch to meet one of the closest.

Throwing my bunch in with 'em, I stopped just long enough to tell the two boys that was hazing 'em in that the stranger's horse was in the bunch I'd brought in and he was afoot somewhere. Then I headed on the back-trail to look for him.

I picked up his trail where I'd left him and followed it along a ways. I seen where he stopped his horse and waited for me

"Sam! Whyn't you tell me before! What you been standin' around gapin' about?"

"Aint had time. Sam, he jes' git back 'bout minute ago. He say—"

"Well, where is he? Quit beatin' about the bush!"

"Yes suh. I gwine tell you, suh; Sam, he under de jail twel he fin' out how you an' Cap'n Jim feels. I fotch him out now."

In a very brief time George was again in the corridor. Behind him was a chastened and shopworn Sam, the ill effects of Steamboat's window-sash and of three days in the cane-patches sadly evident upon him.

The Sheriff drew a long, long breath and fixed the shuffling and road-weary Slewfoot with his sternest gaze.

"Before I kill you, nigger," he commanded coldly, "tell me where's my dawgs?"

Sam twisted uneasily. "Well suh, hit like dis: I wuz jes' about treed dat night when ol' freight-train stop in de woods close to whar I wuz. Dey take on water, an' I clumb in a car whut open. De dawgs clumb in after me."

Slewfoot paused as though his recollections were painful.

"Go on."

"Sho wuz action in dat car den—twel de dawgs fin's out better who I is. I has to ride up close to de roof twel next day. Den we gits on fine. Ol' train keeps a-bumblin' erlong. Us gits so hungry dat, first time train stop, me an' de dawgs gits out. Nigger house across de track, and us stops by dar fo' snack of vittles. I's still lookin' out fo' yo' int'rests, but we's sixty-two miles from home, and I aint got no money. So I sells dat nigger de lil' hound dawgs fo' rabbit-dawgs fo' six bits. Ever sence den, I's been comin' back, suh. Sho is t'ied."

The Sheriff appeared to be giving an imitation of a thunderstorm about to break. "You durned idiot!" he screamed. "Sellin' the county's bloodhounds to a country nigger for rabbit-dawgs! Don't you know it's a hangin' offense, you ape! You—"

But again in a crisis George shambled into the breach. "Cap'n Clem," he announced dramatically, "dem dawgs done back."

At this further shock the Sheriff's speech failed momentarily. His mouth opened, but no words came. Slewfoot supplied some. "Yes suh," he explained complacently. "I knowed dey would. Dat's why I sells 'em. I tells dat nigger jes' tie dem dawgs up two days, and atter dat he couldn't drive 'em away. He must do like I say. I always looks atter yo' int'rests fo' you, Cap'n Clem."

But if the Sheriff's tongue was paralyzed, his fingers were not. Slowly under their movements the most useless thing in all Genesee fluttered to the floor in little glad white bits. It was his resignation.

"The Investor," another of Arthur K. Akers' delightful stories of our quaint dark brethren, will appear in an early issue—and you will find it well worth watching for.)

to head the first bunch down his way. From there on, the tracks of his horse was far apart: he'd been running him and, as I figured, taking after the bunch as they come.

I followed that trail for quite a while; it was doing a lot of zigzags, and I could see that the bunch was somehow getting away from him and back up the mountain; then of a sudden I seen a patch of tore-up ground. It'd been tore up by the hoofs of the little sorrel, and in the middle of that patch was something that made me get off my horse for a closer look. There, as pretty as you please, was the print of the stranger's body where he'd connected with mother

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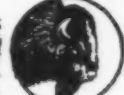
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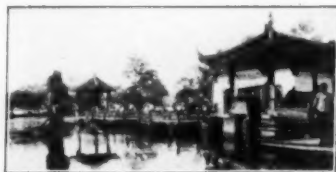
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earth and measured his length. The stranger had been throwed off.

That was hard for me to believe, but there, and right in front of me, was plain proof. I took another long look at the tore-up patch, then got on my horse and went to cutting for tracks which would tell me where the stranger went. One thing I was mighty glad for, and that was he wasn't hurt, and when I run onto the trail he'd left with them neat heels on them pretty boots of his, I could see he was walking straight up and not staggering any. far as I could make out.

His trail crossed a creek, and there I felt better some more, for he'd had water anyway, in case he needed it. Across the creek, a few miles wide, many miles long and running towards camp, was a strip of lava rock. No earth was there to follow a trail, and I lost track of him, but I figured he'd be following the lava strip back to camp on account it might be a little easier walking there.

I rode on back towards camp following it, and feeling sure I'd run across him before he got in, but I rode many miles, and no stranger was seen. A little ways further, I spots the boys riding up; they'd started out looking for him too.

After I told 'em where I left his trail, they rode on to look for him; my horse was tired, and I went on into camp. The boys didn't get back till away after dark, and no sign of the stranger had been found. We built a big log fire outside and where it could be seen for miles around. It would burn a long time, and if the stranger was within ten miles, he couldn't fail but see it. We couldn't do no more.

The fire burned down; morning came, and still no sign of the stranger. Two riders was sent out to look for him that day, and when night come and they rode back, the disappearance of that *hombre* was still as much of a puzzle as ever. It seemed like the earth had just swallowed him. Another day went by, and it was as the mountains was throwing long shadows that Joe points out to a dust across the flats. A rider was making it.

The last horse had been unsaddled as the rider came up to the corral gate and got off his horse. It was the stranger, but a very different-looking stranger than he'd been a few days past and when he'd made his first appearance at the horse camp. There was a stub growth of whiskers and hollow cheeks on a face that'd been round and smooth, and the alkali dust that covered him from head to foot sure done the work of disfiguring all he'd been to look at.

We all greeted him as though nothing had happened, and not a question was asked; we didn't have to ask, on account that there was everything about him that told us all we cared to know and plainer than words. It was all easy reading, the same as the print he'd left in the foothills and where the sorrel throwed him off.

THE horse he'd rode in wore the brand of a neighbor outfit which was some thirty miles away, and knowing he couldn't of caught him on the range with a saddle on him and all that way, it was easy to see he'd rambled on afoot for some time till he come to one of that neighbor outfit's camps, borrowed the horse, and got his directions to come back on from there. Yes sir, the stranger had went and got lost.

It was sure a mystery to us how a man that could ride like he'd rode the sorrel, and do such fancy roping as he'd done, could turn out to be such a freak. "How and where," we'd ask one another, "can a man learn to ride like he could if it aint on the range?" Nobody could answer that, and the mystery instead of getting any clearer with reasoning, kept a-getting deeper.

The next day came, and a long ride was



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ahead for that morning. The stranger showed up at the corral and we seen him make his spinning loop with a lot of interest. That interest went up many notches as we seen that same loop settle around the head of a tall, rawboned brown horse. That horse was one of the meanest buckers in the outfit and didn't belong to his string none at all; but he'd mistook him amongst the two hundred ponies for one that'd been pointed out to him that first morning.

"I guess you don't want him," says Long Tom, riding up. "He aint in your string, and besides, he's sure hell on wheels when it comes to bucking."

"Whose string is he in?" asks the stranger. "Nobody's; we take turns at him once in a while, and he's for anybody that wants him."

"Well, I guess I'll try him, then, if I can get somebody to help me saddle him."

HE got all the help he wanted, and in less time than it takes to tell it, the saddle and bridle was on the big horse, and the blindfold ready to take off soon as the stranger was well set. That *hombre* climbed on not a bit ruffled, and when ready he told us so in a way that would make us put our money on him.

The blindfold was yanked off, and it was no more than done when the tall gelding called on his wiry frame to do its duty. Two spurred heels went up in the air about the time the horse did, and when that pony buried his head in the dirt in a hard-hitting jump, them spurred heels came down on his neck and played a ringing tattoo there.

Between the belling of that horse, the ringing of the spur-rowels, the sound of that pony's hoofs hitting the earth—all a-popping, and keeping time—it sure made a sound worth sticking around for by itself; and even if a man couldn't of seen the goings on, he could of told by them sounds that here was a hard horse to ride, and on top of him was a hard man to throw.

The stranger seemed in the height of his glory; he was setting up there, and fast and crooked as the jumps came, he wasn't caught napping at any of 'em. He met that pony halfway in all he done, and when finally the big gelding seemed to have enough and held his head up, we'd forgot that the man on top of him had let a little sorrel horse buck him off, we'd forgot that he'd let a bunch of horses get away from him on the range, and even his getting lost and roaming straight away from the home camp seemed away in the past. The stranger was one of us again.

We filed out of the corral and strung out on the morning's circle. Me and the stranger was riding side by side and by ourselves a ways; I expected that brown horse to go to bucking again most any time, and sure enough, Long Tom had no more than started us out in a lope, when I glimpses a brown hunk of horseflesh transformed into a cloud-reaching and then earth-pounding whirlwind. I heard the beller of the pony, but I didn't hear no spurs ringing, and when I looked for the reason, I was surprised to see that them spurs wasn't at all where I thought they'd be—on the horse's neck. Instead of that they was buried in the cinch with a staying holt, and I thought for a second that I seen the stranger grabbing for the horn.

Little Joe, who'd been to one side a ways, rode close about that time, and I noticed the blank look on his face, like he didn't believe his eyes; and my face must of showed about the same look as I stared back at him, 'cause I know I was sure as surprised as he was.

Somehow I was glad when the brown horse quit bucking and lined out on a lope with the stranger *still* on him; I sort of hated to get disappointed in that feller, and



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I could see that Joe felt the same about it; but we both could see that it was pure luck the stranger hadn't been bucked off—he'd rode his horse like a rag and hung on with a death grip.

"That feller seems like a different man outside a corral," Joe remarked as we rode on a-trying to figger out the puzzle.

Long Tom done a mighty fine job of scattering the riders that day; most every man wound up by hisself, and none of us got to see one another again till the circle was made and we was within a few miles of the corral wings. Every man had a bunch, and some two, and when the gate closed on the last bunch that was run in, we all natural-like begin to take a tally on one another, to see if any was missing.

It was then that Long Tom points at me and Joe and says: "You two better change horses, take an extra one along and go look for the stranger. I'm thinking he's afoot again." Yep, the stranger was amongst the missing again!

IT was pure luck when we found him, near sundown. Joe had spotted an object up on the ridge that first looked like a prospector's monument, and when we rode up on it, it turned out to be the stranger a-setting on his saddle. His clothes was near all tore off of him, and the fancy saddle looked like it'd run up against a buzz saw; it was all twisted out of shape and caked with dirt.

The stranger's spirit was sort of low too, but he managed to smile as he seen us, and half-hearted-like told us how the brown horse had bucked him off.

"But what happened to your saddle?" asks Joe.

"Well, I guess that's my fault," goes on the stranger. "I never figgered that a cinch gets loose as a horse runs and ga'ts up. I'd been running him up a slope and the saddle slipped back. After he bucked me off, it turned under his belly, and as you see that pony sure done a good job kicking it apart."

We all rode on back to camp, not saying much. I'd glance at the stranger once in a while, and I could see that feller was thinking about something mighty strong. I wished he'd let us in on his thoughts, but it wasn't till we'd near reached camp that he seemed to want to loosen up.

"I can't figger it out," he says.

"What's that?" asks Joe.

"Well," he goes on, "it's the difference in my riding, and why there is such a big difference between riding a bad horse out of a chute where there's a band playing and folks cheering, and riding that same horse out where there's not a soul for miles around. I seem to lose my confidence out here by myself this way; and then riding along, not knowing just when the horse is apt to go to bucking, sort of gets on my nerve. I've come to find out that it sure aint like riding that horse in front of the grandstand. I know he's going to buck there, and exactly when. I'm prepared for it, and when he's through, I'm through riding him too.

"You notice," he says after a while, "that I ride very different when inside of the corral than I do when out of it. . . . I guess that only goes to prove I'm a show hand, and not a cowboy. I followed circuses and Wild West shows as a kid, and learned to ride there. Afterwards I took on contests, but I never rode a bucking horse outside of corrals or show-grounds before. I don't have to tell you that I never rode outside of town limits either—you can see that; but it's sure surprising to me how much there's to contend with out here, not only with the kind of horses a feller rides, but the country is so damn' big, and there's so much a man has to know to work in it and qualify."

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WE was saddling up as usual the next morning when we notice the stranger had picked his own horse. He tied a few belongings on the saddle and then turned toward us all as we was getting ready to file out for that day's riding.

"I'm not riding with the outfit today," he says, walking toward us and smiling. "And you boys wont have to look for me after the day's ride is over, 'cause I'm going back to where I can ride my bucking horse inside a fence, where there's people around to watch me, and a brass band playing and keeping time with my pony's hoofs as they hit the ground."

He started to get on his horse and ride away. We watched him the while and noticed what a change had come over the fancy rigging that'd been so pretty and shiny just a few days past. The neat boots was et up with alkali, the fancy stitching all unraveled from the ramblings he'd done afoot. The saddle was all loose and tore apart here and there.

"The country sure put its mark on that outfit," says Joe as we rode out of the corral. "Damn' shame, too; it was sure pretty."

A month went by, and then one day Long Tom received a letter from the stranger; inside the envelope was a newspaper clipping and telling some of the winners of the prizes at some rodeo. Heading the list was a name underlined; the man packing that name had won first prize in the bucking horse contest and first in rope-spinning also. At the bottom of the strip was handwriting which said: "The name underlined is yours truly, the stranger."

We all read the strip; after which Long Tom poured a little syrup on the back of it and pasted it to the wall. On the top of the strip, and to sort of decorate and identify, he nailed a twisted piece of silver which the brown horse had kicked off the stranger's saddle. It had been found that day out on the hardpan flat. (Another story by Will James will appear in an early issue.)

T I D E S

(Continued from page 76)

holstery; for Colonel Burchard had invited Blanche and Ray to dinner.

His first thought was that she looked older. The picture of her he had carried in his mind was that of a young girl, whereas now, in a small velvet hat trimmed with ostrich plumes, and a dress that touched the floor, she was a woman. But the change was more than a mere change of costume. Her hazel eyes had lost the dreamy look that used to make him wonder in what far field her thoughts were roaming; they seemed brighter, more alert, and as, with a smile friendly yet appraising, they met his, he felt that everything he thought, everything he was, must be revealed to such an understanding gaze.

Ray greeted him with a clap on the back, exclaiming:

"Well, Old Soberides, how did you like the Statue of Liberty and the Brooklyn Bridge?" And they laughed together as Alan admitted the accuracy of the guess as to his sightseeing.

"I thought we'd dine here," the Colonel said to Blanche, "unless there's some other restaurant you'd prefer." But before she could answer, Ray spoke up:

"Oh, let's go to the Waldorf, Grandpa. It's the newest place in town. Everybody's going there."

The Colonel glanced at him but continued to address Blanche, asking:

"Does the Waldorf suit you best, my dear?"

"Oh, any place suits me," she said; so they set forth, crossing Broadway and moving up Fifth Avenue, now brightly lighted and crowded with private turnouts, hansom cabs and lumbering busses, their high-perched drivers kings of all wheeled traffic.

At first the four walked abreast, but Blanche and Alan presently dropped back, falling in behind the other pair, and she began to ask about little William. Was Florence taking good care of him? Did Alan think William still remembered her?

His answers were as encouraging as he could make them, and when they had spoken of his family, and Blanche had told him of her latest letter from Aunt Martha, she questioned him about himself. Did he regret leaving the university? Did he like his work? How was Leta? Was she as pretty as she used to be, and did he see her as much as ever? When he had answered these questions, she turned her head suddenly, gazing up into his face and asking: "Haven't you some news for me, Alan?" And when he looked at her blankly, she pursued: "I

mean about Leta. Aren't you engaged yet?"

"I—I don't believe so."

"That tells me all I wanted to know," she said, smiling. "If you don't know whether you're engaged, you must be—or pretty near it."

"You have changed!" he told her; and as again she looked at him, he added: "Two years ago, you weren't so foxy."

She became suddenly thoughtful, saying: "It's queer to think that anyone can live in a world and know as little about it as I did then."

"Or I."

"Yes," she said, "you're older, too. What has made you feel older? Business?"

"Partly that."

"Some other girl? Some one besides Leta?"

"Not exactly."

"That means yes. Tell me about her."

"I'm not proud of it," he began, and recounted to her the tale of his affair with Sophie, describing her, telling of her curious attraction for him, and how, against his judgment, he had gone to see her.

"I know," she said comprehendingly as he finished; and she added: "As long as it turned out the way it did, I think it was a good experience."

"Yes," he agreed. "I learned some lessons. And do you know, Blanche, the thing that surprised me most about it was the discovery that I could be so strongly attracted to a person I didn't respect."

"I know," she said again; and Alan looked at her quickly, wondering whether he had heard her sigh.

LATER, looking back upon that unimportant talk, he was thankful for it. At dinner Ray monopolized the conversation, telling of successes with his work, of the position he had been offered on a newspaper, of his doubts about the advisability of accepting it, and his thought of going to Italy, where they would be able to live cheaply and he could give all his time to writing stories and literary criticisms.

"If I were in your place," put in his grandfather, "I'd take the job." But Ray waved the advice aside:

"The trouble with a newspaper job," he replied, "is that there's no future to it. A man just slaves away until he's middle-aged, and then they drop him."

"They didn't drop Horace Greeley, or Dana, or Joseph Medill," remarked Colonel Burchard.

"Editors," said Ray, "—executives. I'd



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never be satisfied just writing editorials; I want to do more imaginative things. And besides, it looks to me as if any man who had a regular job was just a time-server. I want to be my own master."

Beneath his bushy gray brows the Colonel regarded his grandson somberly.

"You can't be," he said.

"Why not?"

"No one ever is," replied the Colonel as he paid the check.

THE following two weeks passed with incredible rapidity. Every day was spent downtown with the bankers, and several times they met with them in the evening, dining at their residences or at clubs.

"I want you to know these men and see how they do things," the Colonel said; and Alan, grateful for the opportunity, bent his thoughts to making himself useful to the conferees, dispatching telegrams, keeping memoranda, taking care of files of papers, endeavoring to anticipate their calls for information on this point or that and have it ready.

The Colonel's negotiations were made more difficult by the disturbed state of business throughout the country, aftermath of the panic of the year before. New failures were daily reported; strikes were increasingly prevalent, and the papers were printing stories about an agitator, a man named Coxey, who in Ohio was gathering a mob of radicals and hoboes called an "army," at the head of which he proposed to march on Washington as a protest against the prevailing hard times. Because of these conditions, the Colonel's associates in Chicago had been none too confident that his mission would be successful, and his completion of arrangements for reorganizing and refinancing the Cozzens Pump Company was therefore the greater victory.

Riding uptown with his employer after the final conference, Alan knew that he was much pleased with his success, and he understood that the Colonel meant to signify that he was pleased with him, as well, when, as they were packing preparatory to the journey home, he remarked:

"Mr. Broderick has noticed you, Alan."

Mr. Broderick, president of C. V. A. Broderick & Co., a powerful banking and investment house established many years before by his father, had acted as unofficial chairman of the meetings; and Alan had observed him with the greater interest because he was a type so definite, so characteristic of New York. Like many men prominent in the financial district, he wore a frock coat, silk hat and side-whiskers—the latter being gray, resembling neatly balanced bulbs of shaving lather.

One day, after adjournment, Colonel Burchard chanced in the course of conversation to mention Zenas Wheelock. Mr. Broderick, it developed, was acquainted with him; upon learning that Alan was his grandson he had become cordial; and this afternoon, at parting, had told Alan to drop in and see him whenever he came to New York.

Now, as the Colonel strapped his bag, Alan mentioned this; whereat the other nodded approvingly, declaring that the entrée to a man of Mr. Broderick's position could be a very valuable asset.

Their packing completed, the Colonel went to do some final shopping; and Alan, having deposited the baggage in the check-room at Grand Central Station, took a street-car for the upper West Side to bid farewell to Blanche.

RAY'S home was in a brown sandstone house near Riverside Drive, and the maid who answered his ring evidently was expecting him.

"Mrs. Norcross says come right up," she announced; and Alan, ascending to the fourth floor, found Blanche awaiting him.

In the parlor of their little suite Ray, wearing a quilted bathrobe, was seated at a table, writing.

"Have a drink?" He indicated a whisk bottle and a siphon at his elbow; and upon Alan's replying that he could stay but a moment, turned back to his work. Apparently, however, he could write with one lobe of his brain and listen with another, for as Blanche was giving Alan messages for her Chicago friends, Ray glanced up, remarking:

"How my parents have endured Chicago so long is more than I can see."

"I hear your father's interested in the new steel-frame construction we've developed in Chicago," said Alan; and with a little smile he added: "Your mother was born there, you know, and incredible as it may seem, she likes it."

Ray gave a toss of the head, throwing the dark hair back from his forehead.

"You know perfectly well," he answered, "that anybody in Chicago would be delighted to move to New York. You would yourself." He cocked his head and raised his eyebrows.

"No, I'd hate to leave my friends."

"So would an old bullfrog in a puddle," said Ray, and resumed his writing.

"Don't forget that you have friends here, too," Blanche put in quickly.

"I don't forget it." For a moment they looked into each other's eyes.

Now came suddenly, from the street below, the inharmonious blare of a German band playing "Two Little Girls in Blue," the cornet shrilling against the flatulent *um-pa-pa* of the bass tuba.

With an angry exclamation Ray leaped from his chair, rushed with the siphon to the window, and raising the sash, discharged the contents at the earnest Teutons.

"Get out of here!" he shouted, as the music stopped abruptly. "Get out of here and don't you ever come back!" Drawing in his head, he closed the window and set the siphon on the table. "German bands by day and cats by night!" He raised his arms and let them drop in a dramatic gesture of despair. "My God, how do they expect a man to do creative work!"

"I'm afraid I've broken in on your work too," said Alan, rising.

"Oh, no." Ray dropped into his chair, drained off the remainder of his "highball" and waved his hand in casual farewell as Alan moved across the room.

Blanche followed him, and at the head of the stairs they paused.

"It makes me homesick to see you go," she murmured; and after gazing at him for an instant, reached up and kissed his cheek. Returning the caress, Alan was aware of her husband's dark eyes fixed upon them.

"Parting is such sweet sorrow," Ray said dryly.

As Alan left the house and headed for the station, there lingered with him, unpleasantly, the memory of Ray's ironical smile.

Chapter Twenty-six

IN order to achieve the refinancing of the Pump Company, Colonel Burchard had been obliged to accept the chairmanship of the new board of directors; and because of Alan's familiarity with details of the reorganization, the Colonel, soon after their return to Chicago, placed him on the company's pay-roll as assistant to the chairman.

In marked contrast to the placidity with which his father accepted the news of his appointment was Mrs. Purnell's voluble enthusiasm. She beamed at him, and seizing him by both arms, exclaimed: "How perfectly splendid! I couldn't be more delighted if you were my own son! With such a salary you'll be able to keep on saving, and at the same time have more—more nice

A Personal Service for PARENTS

ARE you, perhaps, faced at this very moment with the serious problem of selecting a school or camp for your son or daughter or some young relative, one which will carry out your aims for them with due regard to their individual traits and temperaments?

In making this selection, you have only family tradition and your own personal knowledge and that of friends, which is obviously limited. Perhaps you long for the assistance of some one who has made a study of private schools and camps to give you impartial advice and comparative evaluations.

The Director of The Red Book Magazine's Department of Education is a Vassar graduate. With her are associated a group of college men and women. During the past five years, we have been privileged to develop the most complete private school and camp information service ever maintained by a magazine. We have visited, not once but many times, over 800 private boarding schools of all kinds in every part of the country. Our associate director, lecturer, explorer and all-round authority on outdoor life, has traveled 16,700 miles by automobile and visited and reported on 425 private camps for boys and girls in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Middle West, and the South and we have investigated some 300 others.

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Please remember this is not a paid service, either to parents, schools or camps, but merely one of a great magazine's many ways of serving the American family.

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things. I'll never forget how fine Hector Cozzens looked in his frock coat, and—

"Yes," put in Leta. "I was thinking of that too. I'm so proud of you I can't express it! And if you do decide to get a frock coat, remember it pays to go to a good tailor. Hector has all his clothes made by Hansen."

Though their enthusiasm pleased him, Alan was somewhat disconcerted by the alacrity with which they had translated his prosperity into terms of clothes. Still, perhaps they were right; his wardrobe was neither so extensive nor so fashionable as the wardrobes of some of his friends.

When he went home that evening, he found on the hall table a telegram from St. Augustine, and the glow of satisfaction with which he read the congratulations of his aunt and his grandfather was his greatest reward.

Encouraged by Harris to take their time about returning, Zenas Wheelock and his daughter planned to make the return journey by easy stages, visiting various Southern cities on the way; and Harris, with an unwonted show of concern for his father's health, was already urging upon Martha the advisability of hurrying him direct to Mackinac, that he might avoid Chicago's summer heat. However, in the late spring, labor troubles, general throughout the country, spread to the works of the Pullman Palace Car Company, situated on the outskirts of Chicago; and when in June a general railroad strike appeared imminent, Alan suggested to his father that the travelers be advised to hasten their return. Finding Harris strongly opposed to the idea, he consulted Colonel Burchard, and upon learning that the latter agreed with him, reluctantly took matters into his own hands and telegraphed his aunt.

EVENTS quickly proved the wisdom of his course. Zenas Wheelock and his daughter reached home barely in time to avoid a railroad strike which paralyzed the transportation systems centering on Chicago. Nevertheless, Harris Wheelock remained stubbornly resentful of Alan's action, and continually urged upon his father the immediate advantages of Mackinac, accessible by steamer.

"I do hope you'll go up the Lake before the weather gets sweltering," he said one evening shortly after their return, as after supper the family moved out to the side porch.

"We've spent a good deal of money this past winter," demurred the old man.

"Oh," said Harris, "we can afford to keep comfortable."

"I imagine it will be quite a while before the Pump Company pays dividends again," said his father.

"The Colonel hopes to begin in about a year," Alan put in.

"Well, anyway," said Harris, "you haven't

much of that stock, and everything else is going well."

"Things keep on all right at Napier Place?"

"Yes—as I wrote you." And as if in recognition of their common feeling that Napier Place at best was a distasteful topic, Harris quickly changed the subject, speaking again of the pleasure his father would derive from revisiting his old haunts at Mackinac.

Presently sounded the distant jingle of the doorbell, and a moment later Delia announced a caller to see Alan.

Under the lighted chandelier, in the hall, his bald head glistening like a piece of porcelain, the fingers of both hands working at the brim of a small straw hat held over his stomach, stood Mr. Schoen. He did not reply when Alan greeted him, but with head bent forward and brows elevated, stared at him over the tops of his gold-rimmed spectacles; and when at last he spoke, his voice came in a low, accusing mutter.

"Where iss my daughter?"

ALAN was nonplused. "Why, I'm sure I don't know, Mr. Schoen," he answered. "How should I know where she is?"

With his watery blue eyes still fixed on Alan's face, the barber repeated in a rising tone:

"I tell you, where iss my daughter?"

Clearly he was wrought up; and Alan, annoyed though he was, made allowance for the fact.

"As I said before, Mr. Schoen," he answered crisply, "I haven't the slightest idea. Has she left home?"

Still peering doubtfully at Alan, Schoen nodded.

"How long has she been gone?"

To this the barber did not reply until the question was repeated, when for the first time his gaze left Alan's face.

"Two months," he muttered, looking at the carpet.

"Haven't you any idea where she is?"

Schoen looked up, demanding:

"What do you dink I came for?"

The sullen answer angered Alan.

"I don't know what you came for," he said sharply, "but if you want to stay, you'd better keep a civil tongue in your head!"

"Excuse me," said the other, suddenly becoming meek, and Alan was sorry he had spoken harshly.

"What made you think I'd know anything about it?" he inquired.

"Sophie liked you."

"And I liked her. But I haven't seen her in a long time. About a year."

"Oh," said Schoen blankly, and started toward the front door.

"Wait a minute," Alan stopped him.

"Let's talk this over and see if I can help you." He led the way to the parlor and lit the gas.

"Sit down, Mr. Schoen," he said.

Gerald and Jackie

They're great pals—Gerald Beaumont and Jackie Coogan; and never has there been a finer association in the whole film world than theirs. A month ago Gerald wrote a singularly appealing race-track story, and when the story was done, it was suggested that it had a "part" for Jackie. The little chap read it, and "blew up." Nothing to do but secure the motion-picture rights to that tale. So it was done. The story will be published in the next issue of this magazine, and within a reasonable time thereafter Jackie will appear in it on the screen—with his hair cut!

STILL holding his hat against his stomach, the barber sank to a rigid sitting posture on the edge of a chair, and entered upon a rambling discourse about the various positions Sophie had held, and the reasons she gave for losing them.

"De trouble vas," he said, "she'd get down late to work because she stayet out late at nights. Ve tolt her and tolt her, but ve couldn't do nodding vit her. So I gif her good licking, and after dot she don't come back no more."

"You licked her?" Alan stared at the strange little man, visualizing the scene.

"Vot else could ve do?" He spoke defensively. "I tolt you ve couldn't do nodding vit her."

Perceiving that it would be useless, at this stage, to argue about Schoen's method of dealing with his daughter, Alan turned to a more practical aspect of the case, asking:

"Have you been to the police?"

"No, no, no!" Schoen was vehement. "Ve don't vant no police!"

"Why not?"

"I tell you ve don't vant no police! De police gets everyding in de papers, and dot vay her gramma in Aurora would find out."

"But you've got to find her! Do you realize that if you don't find her, something horrible may happen to her?"

"Sure I realize! But her gramma's old—it would kill her."

"Why, you can't be worrying about that, now! There must be some way of getting the police to keep it quiet—in fact, I'm pretty sure we can fix it. Mr. Murphy, across the street, has a brother on the force—a captain. He's a very decent man—a friend of my grandfathers. Let me take you over to his house."

"No, no, no!" cried Schoen, jumping to his feet. "No police! De police is a bad lot! Dey tell everyding to de papers!" And to Alan's assurance that Captain Murphy could be trusted he paid no heed, but moved quickly to the hall.

"Can't you get it through your head," demanded Alan, stopping him at the front door, "that it's your daughter you've got to think of, and not all these other people?"

"Think of her!" echoed Schoen, in a quavering voice. "Think of her! Vot haf ve been thinking of for two months—and her mamma crying all de time!" A tear formed on the lower lid of his left eye, and overflowing, streaked slowly down his wizened cheek.

HALF pitying, half enraged at the blundering old man, Alan seized him by the lapels.

"For God's sake, man, be reasonable! What if the newspapers should find out? What would that matter, compared with getting her back? I can guarantee that Captain Murphy wont tell the papers. Come along, now—show your good sense and let me take you to see him! He lives only a few blocks—"

With a jerk, the force of which surprised Alan, the barber pulled away from him.

"Don't you be telling me vat to do!" he exclaimed, retreating through the doorway. "I know vat to do and vat not to do! I know my business as good as anypoty, see?" With an angry shake of the head, he swung around and stamped across the porch.

But at the steps he turned, a figure once more meek and pitiful.

"Excuse me," he begged. "Stanting all tay by my chair I git tired. I guess tonight I don't feel very good." He hesitated, the muscles of his face working as he endeavored to keep back the tears.

"If maybe some day you see her, tell her Mamma's sick, and peace, peace would she come home. Tell her,"—he hesitated,— "tell her if she come back I don't lick her no more."

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Chapter Twenty-seven

FOR Alan the summer passed rapidly. His work at the Pump Company absorbed him; business experience of varied kinds came at him with a rush that sometimes threatened to overwhelm him; yet Colonel Burchard continually gave him new responsibilities. Often, when obliged to make a quick decision, Alan felt like a chess-player hurried into an ill-considered move, and there were times when he wondered whether any amount of experience would equip him with the calm, sound judgment the Colonel continually exhibited. Now and then, to his great annoyance, he made mistakes; but the Colonel seemed undisturbed by them.

"If a man is any good," he said to Alan as they were driving home one Saturday afternoon from the plant, "I believe in giving him all the responsibility he will take. And every man who accepts responsibility is bound to make mistakes. His object should be to avoid making the same one twice."

Rounding the corner of the block on which they lived, they were hailed by Mr. Dunham, who in his buggy drew up beside them.

"I'm just going out to Washington Park," he told the Colonel. "to see McLean and some of his friends play that game he's been talking so much about. Wont you come along?"

"Doing anything this afternoon, Alan?" the Colonel asked; and as Alan had no plans,—Leta having gone to Wisconsin for two weeks,—they continued to the park, where, upon a lawn, now more yellow than green, their neighbor Mr. McLean and several other gentlemen were gathered.

"The name of the game," elucidated the Colonel, "is golf. It's spelled g-o-l-f, but they don't pronounce the l. I saw it in Scotland some years ago, and now they've begun to play it around New York. I see they're even going to have a tournament somewhere in the East this year."

He tied his horses, and with Alan crossed over to the little group, each member of which was equipped with a tubular bag containing sticks with heads of various shapes, some of wood, some of metal. Mr. McLean produced a small white ball which Alan examined, and when, returning it, he asked if golf resembled shiny, the Scot was scandalized.

Presently the game started. Each successive player perched his little ball on a small pile of earth, and with a swift swing of the club drove it toward a point about two hundred yards distant, marked by a handkerchief fluttering from an upright stick. He then followed the ball, and coming up with it selected from his bag a club designed to meet the condition in which the ball chanced to lie, and drove it forward again, his object being to get it into a condensed milk can, sunk in the ground where the stick stood. One of the gentlemen had brought a lawnmower, and with this the grass, for a distance of ten or fifteen feet around the sunk-can, had been cut close, permitting the ball to roll freely when given the final tap with a club called a "putter." The player making the distance with the fewest strokes was the victor so far as this particular covering of the distance was concerned; but the thing had to be gone through with many times in order to make a full game, and one of the gentlemen explained that, for a proper demonstration, at least eight more cans should be sunk at various points, so that instead of going repeatedly over the same ground, the players might proceed for a mile or two, meeting new conditions and new obstacles.

MR. McLEAN presently placed a club in Colonel Burchard's hands and after coaching him in the manner of holding it,

the manner of standing, the manner of swinging, and even the position in which the swing should be completed, put down a ball for him to hit. Alan gathered that the Colonel was not greatly interested, but when, in spite of the terrific smash he gave it, the ball rolled only a few feet, his pride was piqued; again and again he tried, and at last succeeded in sending a shot sailing through the air.

He spoke of it as they drove down Drexel Boulevard, among the bicycles, at sunset.

"To feel the club hit with a click and see the ball soar, gives a curiously pleasurable sensation," he admitted to Alan. "Still, I can't believe the game will ever become popular. It isn't lively enough, and it requires expensive grounds."

"You see," he continued, "all games are fads. Young as you are, you have seen games come and go—croquet, tiddledewinks and crokinole, for instance. Just now there's a rage for tennis and for pigs-in-clover; tomorrow it will be something else."

"Do you think the bicycle a fad too?" asked Alan, looking down the broad, smooth reach of highway with its endless stream of safeties.

The Colonel shook his head.

"I'm afraid not," he replied. "The bicycle is inexpensive and utilitarian. I fear it has come to stay."

HE had hardly spoken when a dozen or more scorchers overtook and passed them, laughing and shouting, their bodies bent to drooping handle-bars.

An expression of horror crossed the Colonel's face.

"Look at that!" he exclaimed. "Bloomers! Two or three years ago both those girls would have been arrested for appearing in such a costume. That's where the bicycle is a menace to society—badly brought up young men and young women riding off together, anywhere and everywhere! I'm sure I don't know what this younger generation is coming to!"

At the Wheelocks' carriage block he drew up, and Alan, alighting, entered the house. On the hall table were two letters: one from Leta, the other—in an envelope bearing a picture of the hotel at Mackinac—from his grandfather.

At supper that evening he was alone, his father having failed to put in an appearance; but Delia, waiting on him, tried to keep him entertained. When she was not carrying dishes to or from the kitchen, she stood by the table giving him the gory details of yesterday's murder.

Kindly old Delia greatly enjoyed murders; rising early, she would see the morning paper first, and would be ready to discuss the latest crime-news when the family appeared at breakfast. Similarly the evening paper prepared her, conversationally, for supper, though this tendency of hers was resolutely discouraged by Martha Wheelock. Now, however, with Alan at table alone, she felt free to indulge her taste for homicidal discourse.

"He grabbed up her husband's razor, an' he cut her throat from ear to ear," she told Alan, setting before him his dessert—a tremulous blanc mange covered with crushed raspberries, fluid and crimson. "They say the pillow was soaked with blood and the flure was—"

"For goodness' sake, Delia!" Alan pushed back his unfinished dessert, rose from the table, and in spite of Delia's protest that lately he hadn't been eating enough, left the room, moving to the library, where he dropped into his grandfather's easy chair and took up the story he was reading.

The tale of *Trilby*, the beautiful artist's model, with the perfect foot and the exquisite voice produced under *Svengali's* hypnotic spell, so entertained him that he abandoned a half-formed plan to attend a hop,

this evening, at the Hyde Park Hotel. Without Leta, he reflected, he wouldn't have much fun there anyway. How glad he was that one of the two weeks of her absence was past!

Having read for a time, he crossed to the desk and wrote to her. A gentle breeze from the lake stirred the long lace curtains at the windows; the air was balmy, and outside he saw a silvery blueness that told him of the rising moon. He rose and looked into the shimmering street. A glorious August night! He would stroll over to the post office and mail his letter.

It was cool for this time of year, he reflected as he walked along. In Mackinac it would be chilly; they would be sleeping under blankets. The summer would soon be over, and they would be coming home again.

The little shops at the Corners were dark; even the drug-store was closed, though the gas was burning in the window behind the great crystal urns, filled with liquid, red and green. Having dropped the letter through the slot in the post-office door, he turned back.

At the Shires' corner he was hesitating, half inclined to continue to the foot of the street and see the lake, when from the stoop behind him came the sound of voices uttering good-nights. Turning, he saw some one coming down the Shires' steps, and the moment the figure passed from the shadow of the buildings into the moonlight, he recognized his father.

His greeting seemed to startle Harris.

"Why, what are you doing out here?" he asked. "I thought you were going to a hop."

"I changed my mind," said Alan; and after walking a few steps beside his father, he added: "I guess you weren't as much surprised to see me as I was to see you—coming out of that place."

But Harris seemed to be engaged with his own thoughts. At all events, he did not answer.

Chapter Twenty-eight

UPON Zenas Wheelock's return from Mackinac that autumn, sittings for a portrait were begun, and the library became for a time a studio. Alan was sorry that the portrait had not been attempted earlier, for in the last year his grandfather had lost something of his old-time vigor. True, he continued to take daily exercise, but his walks were shorter than they used to be; and sometimes, while posing for the painter, he would fall asleep.

Besides the gift for catching a likeness, the young painter had a high appreciation of his subject as a native type. The canvas showed Zenas Wheelock in his upholstered armchair, by the library table, with his steel-rimmed spectacles between his strong old fingers, and in his lap a calf-bound volume—Lockman's translation of Voltaire's "Henriade." His attitude gave a feeling that, as he was settling down to read, some one had entered the room and spoken to him, for his eyes were uplifted, and their characteristic expression, kindly, alert and slightly humorous, had been faithfully transcribed.

In the early winter exhibition at the new Art Institute the portrait was prominently hung, and upon the closing of the exhibition it was moved to the recently completed building of the Historical Society, where it was displayed at a reception held in Zenas Wheelock's honor.

Snow fell throughout the day of the reception, floating down in feathery flakes, large and damp, to deepen the slush with which the streets were swimming. Because of the weather Zenas Wheelock and his daughter made the long trip to the North Side in a closed carriage, and when a little after six o'clock they left the Historical Society, to drive home, Colonel Burchard and



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Alan, who had come over from their office, joined them.

"Well, Father, how did you enjoy yourself?" asked Martha as the carriage bowed down Rush Street.

"It was a great pleasure to see so many old friends." His deep voice coming from the dark corner at her side, sounded weary. "There were men and women there whom I shall not see again."

"Don't say that, Father."

"It's as it should be," he replied. "Our work is done. Look at these lighted streets. We're a great city now. Hard to realize that within half a mile of this place I have traded with the Indians, taking their peltries in exchange for blankets, ammunition, kettles and ear-bobs. In 1828, I recollect, we brought them jew's-harps, and Dufour taught them to play." He became silent, but his thoughts evidently continued to revolve around old trading days, for after some minutes he went on:

"Dufour was a better fiddler than old John Kinzie; always there were dancing parties as soon as he got here. A discharged soldier played the fife, and another the drum. You can't imagine the mixed crowd—an officer in uniform dancing with McKee's half-breed wife; and the officer's wife, fresh from the East in her silks and satins, paired off with a French Canadian in a buckskin shirt, or a carter with his trousers tucked into his boots."

He relaxed into silence, and when presently they entered the lighted house, fatigue showed plainly in his face. And though he moved after supper to the library and as usual took up a book, he was soon dozing in his chair.

AT the jingle of the doorbell, half an hour later, he stirred slightly but did not open his eyes; and Alan, answering the summons, tiptoed from the room.

Opening the front door, he found a bulky figure standing in the semi-darkness of the porch, and it was only when the caller stepped into the hall that Alan recognized Frank Murphy's uncle, the captain of police.

"Is your grandfather in?" he asked; and upon Alan's affirmative reply, took off his dark blue cap and brass-buttoned overcoat and shook them out of the door to get rid of the damp snow before hanging them on the hall rack. The Captain, like his brother, had come from Ireland as a child, and the faint trace of brogue in his speech was pleasing. Alan showed him into the parlor, lighted the gas and left him enthroned like a huge Buddha in the straight-backed chair on which, last summer, Sophie's father had sat uneasily, holding his hat against his stomach.

"Good evening, sir—good evening, sir," said Captain Murphy, rising as Zenas Wheelock entered, and with a genial air suggesting that of a host rather than a visitor, he offered a vast hand.

"I'll just close this door," Alan heard him say, and for some time thereafter the only sound from the parlor audible to Alan and his aunt, in the library, was the faint rumble of the two deep voices.

After a while the door opened part way. "Harris!" called Zenas Wheelock. His tone, sharp as the crack of a whip, startled Alan.

"Father's out," he called back; whereupon the door closed again, and the rumble of voices continued.

When some minutes later the two men returned to the hall, Alan was astonished to see Captain Murphy assisting his grandfather into his overcoat.

"I'm obliged to go downtown on a matter of business," he announced hurriedly, looking in at Martha; and the expression of his face was such that she rose quickly and hastened to his side.

"But, Father—it's such an awful night!"

"That's what I was telling him," put in the policeman earnestly; and turning to the old man, who had dropped into a chair and was drawing on his storm rubbers, he urged: "Why not let it go until tomorrow?"

Zenas Wheelock shook his head, rose, stamped his feet into the rubbers and took his hat from the rack.

"I may be late," he said over his shoulder. "Don't sit up for me."

"Please, Father," Martha began, but he cut her off, declaring:

"I must act at once."

"Look here, Grandpa," Alan broke in, "can't I go instead?" He reached for his ulster, but his grandfather, with a hand upon the doorknob, quickly faced about.

"Do me the favor to stay with your aunt," he replied in a tone admitting of no argument, and followed by the Captain, went quickly out.

Still holding his coat, Alan turned to Martha.

"Auntie, what can it be, taking him downtown at this time of the night?"

With anxious eyes she stood for a moment gazing at him.

"Napier Place!" Her whisper was sharp with prescience.

COULD she be right? And if she was right, what did it mean? There came to him a sudden memory of the day when he had found Shire in his father's office. Last summer he had met his father coming out of Shire's house. He had never heard his grandfather's voice sound as it did tonight when he opened the parlor door and called for his son.

"That's it!" he said. "Something has broken loose down there, and I'll bet you Shire's at the bottom of it!"

"Shire?" she repeated. "I don't see what Shire has to do with it."

"I don't exactly, either," he admitted. "Not yet."

"But," she began, "how could—"

"He's managed somehow to bamboozle Father," Alan broke in. "That's it. You'll see!" He was drawing on his ulster. "What's the number of the house?"

"Twelve. You aren't going there? Oh, Alan, I loathe the thought of your going into that neighborhood!"

"Don't you fret, Auntie; I can take care of myself. And some member of the family ought to be with him. You and Grandpa don't realize that I've grown up, that's all." He threw his arm around her shoulders, kissed her on the cheek, and hurried out, hoping to catch up with his grandfather at Oakland station.

But the train had gone, and it was after ten when having reached the city, he started toward the forbidden thoroughfare.

Where Napier Place was, and what it was, he now knew well. From the business street crossing its northern extremity he had often glanced down it as he passed, noting rows of houses, many of them substantial in appearance, interspersed with low shacks and saloons.

In contrast to adjacent thoroughfares, alive with traffic, Napier Place by day appeared curiously deserted. The shades of the houses were drawn, the shutters closed; an occasional brewery truck or grocery wagon, rattling over the cobblestones, seemed to intrude unwarrantably upon the solitude, and the few pedestrians walked hurriedly, as if eager to round the first corner.

Boys who in Alan's schooldays used to stand apart and snicker over cigarette-pictures of extravaganza queens in tights, grew up to snicker over Napier Place and its more conspicuous establishments—Hattie Le Jeune's, Vonnie Landon's and the notorious Josie's. Some of the young men boasted of nocturnal excursions "down the line," and had carried sightseeing so far as to call at various resorts and buy rounds of beer;

and a few of the more knowing ones, evidently anxious to be considered rakes, let fall sly hints, inviting speculation on the part of other youths, as to just how dissolute their conduct in the district may have been.

These hints and stories had aroused in Alan a dim curiosity, but his curiosity was more than counterbalanced by an aversion similar to that he used to feel for the Chamber of Horrors at the Eden Musee; and this aversion, coupled with the knowledge of his grandfather's chagrin over the degradation of the neighborhood in which he used to live, had caused him to avoid the street.

Tonight, intent on the task of locating his grandfather, he gave hardly a thought to the character of Napier Place as he turned into it; but he had proceeded only a few steps when he became acutely conscious of the change in his surroundings.

The street he left behind derived a kind of sordid brightness from the illuminated windows of saloons, cheap restaurants, tiny drug-stores and pawnbrokers' shops, but on Napier Place even the saloons looked dim, and the street-lamps, far apart, glowed feebly through the falling snow. At the curb stood a pair of dilapidated four-wheelers, the blanketed horses drooping, while the hackmen, in the shelter of a near-by wall, stamped their feet in the slush.

"Want to see the town, boss?"

Alan had moved but a little way farther when his attention was attracted by a sharp ticking sound at his side; turning, he saw a woman rapping with a coin on the glass panel of a door flush with the sidewalk's edge; the faint light within revealed her insinuating smile, its significance emphasized by a beckoning finger.

A cab splattered past, the raucous voice of a passenger raised in song:

"Rattle-dazzle, rattle-dazzle,
Drunk as I am, I don't give a damn!"

Halfway along the block the vehicle drew up, and several men, alighting, entered a house. Up and down the street other dark overcoated figures were continually ascending to front doors which, opening, emitted shafts of light and a harsh jangle of pianos.

Above the doors large numbers were displayed upon illuminated transoms, but the windows of the houses were discreetly curtained, showing merely a faint glow around the edges of drawn shades or between the parallel interstices of inner shutters. However, no effort at concealment could hide the fact that this short thoroughfare, by day so silent and deserted, had come to life under cover of the darkness; and Alan, proceeding on his way, was struck by the thought that the furtive prowlers here resembled cockroaches in an untidy kitchen.

Unlike the other houses, Number Twelve stood a little way back from the street, the open space about it surrounded by tall billboards. It was a double house with bay windows at each side, and the darkness was not sufficient to obliterate its look of dilapidated dignity. A cat darted across his path as he approached the steps and like a shadow melted into the blackness of the basement arway.

At his ring the door opened slightly, and the face of a negro maid showed in the aperture.

"Can't let nobody in tonight," she said in a low voice, and was about to close the door when Alan shouldered past her.

"You betuh git out quick!" With an expressive thumb she pointed over her shoulder to a pair of arched doors, adding in a hoarse whisper: "De police's in de pahlor wid de madam."

"That's all right. It's Captain Murphy I want to see."

"Oh, 'scuse me, suh!" She smiled ingratiatingly, as if to placate a detective.



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THROUGH an atmosphere stale with the combined smells of tobacco-smoke, perfumery and beer, he moved to the double doorway and rapped, aware, as he did so, of several women peering down at him from the semi-obscure of the stair-landing.

Almost immediately Captain Murphy opened the door, and Alan found himself looking into a spacious chamber, with wall-paper and hangings of florid red. At the far side of the room, still wearing his overcoat, his grandfather was seated in a gilded chair, talking with a slim little woman dressed in black, who was sitting at one end of an enormous sofa upholstered in red plush. She was perhaps forty years of age, with small features and a close-curved bang, and her appearance was so neat and ladylike that Alan wondered what she could be doing here.

On sight of him his grandfather half rose. "My boy! My boy!" His voice was distressed. "I told you not to come!"

"I felt I ought to, Grandpa," Alan slipped out of his ulster, threw it over a chair and crossed to the old man. "Let me take your coat—it's hot in here."

But Zenas Wheelock shook his head. "Sit over there," he said with a sigh, indicating a chair in the far corner.

Since entering the room, Alan had been aware of the shrewd gaze of the little woman on the sofa, who, as he sat down, resumed her conversation with his grandfather.

"Then, as I understand it," she said, "you're willing to reimburse me for the extra expense."

"For repairs and decorations, yes," he replied. "That is, assuming you are out, furniture and all, tomorrow."

"That's going to be hard to do on such short notice," she said reflectively.

"Not so darn hard for anybody with your ability, Josie," put in Captain Murphy with reluctant admiration.

"Thanks for the compliment, Captain." She flashed him an ironical smile and turned back to Zenas Wheelock.

"As I see it, Mr. Wheelock, your real trouble isn't with me at all. It's with W. J. Shire. If he disobeyed instructions, that's not my fault. I was acting in good faith, and my lease is—"

"Look here, Josie," the Captain interjected, "as I told you before, there's no use trying to come anything like that on us. Not for a minute! You're a smart woman, and you know mighty well that Mr. Wheelock is treating you a whole lot better than he needs to."

"I don't say he isn't, but my lease—" "You'd better just forget that lease," advised the policeman dryly. "There's no call for Mr. Wheelock to pay you a nickel. He's just doing it out of the kindness of his heart. You're in big luck that we didn't raid you, and nobody knows that better than you."

She was thoughtful for a moment. "Well, then—" she began; and the Captain, without waiting for her to finish, made his own inference.

"Good girl! That's the stuff! There's no use bucking the game."

"I know it," she returned.

"Are all the men out of the house?"

"I'll see." She rose and moved toward the hall, but he stopped her.

"Don't bother. I'll just have a look around myself."

"You're welcome to," she answered coolly, and sat down again.

AT the door the Captain paused, asking: "You wont mind waiting a few minutes, Mr. Wheelock?" And upon the old man's nod, he left the room.

The ensuing silence was broken by Josie. "Maybe you gentlemen would join me in a glass of wine?" she suggested politely,

looking from one to the other; and her air of playing hostess under these circumstances struck Alan as infinitely grotesque.

"No, I thank you, ma'am." Zenas Wheelock, whose reply plainly included Alan, did not look at her as he spoke; he was gazing at the marble mantelpiece, and the abstracted expression of his eyes told his grandson that for him the room was peopled with figures of the past.

Alan wondered if the woman knew that in the happier days of the old mansion Abraham Lincoln had sat beside this fireplace. And if she did know, did she care?

Slowly the old man rose. "If you've no objections, ma'am," he said, "I'd like to look at the library."

"The library?" "The room on the other side of the hall," he explained.

"Oh!" Now she understood. "Why, certainly."

Still with the look of abstraction on his face, he moved across the room and through the double doorway; and Alan, watching him, found his eyes suddenly moist. The old man's self-control could not conceal from his grandson the knowledge of his anguish.

"Horrible weather we're having," Josie's voice, politely conversational, broke in upon his meditations. "Horrible weather to move in."

TO Alan's relief, the heavy tread of Captain Murphy now sounded on the carpeted stairs, and his entrance, a moment later, made a reply unnecessary.

"All clear upstairs," he remarked laconically, "but one of the girls says she wants to go home. My uniform kind of scared her, I guess. Pretty blonde girl, second floor back."

"Yvonne," said Josie, nodding. "Yes, she can go. You know me, Captain—I wouldn't think of keeping any girl that doesn't want to stay."

"I guess we might as well be moving along," he said to Alan. "Where's your grandfather?"

"In the other room."

The Captain took up his heavy blue overcoat, and as Alan moved to help him into it, the stairway, with its red carpet and massive railing of black walnut, came within his range of vision. From the dimly lighted landing above, a girl was descending. When he first caught sight of her, the upper portion of her body was not visible, being hidden by the line of the hall ceiling, but he saw that she was carrying a coat and a traveling-bag, and as with each downward step she came more into view, he had a startled sense of something familiar in the contours of her figure and the lazy grace with which she moved. From the brim of her dark hat hung a gray veil thick enough to conceal her features even if she had not kept her face averted. On emerging from the shadow that obscured the upper stairs, she moved more rapidly, and she had reached the bottom of the flight and was heading for the front door when Alan, standing at the entrance to the parlor, called to her.

"Sophie!" Though her step seemed for the briefest instant to falter, she did not turn, but sped on toward the door.

"Sophie!" he cried again and started after her, but the door slammed sharply in his face.

Turning back, he found the other two regarding him, a speculative frown shadowing the Captain's features, while Josie wore a faint quizzical smile.

"Isn't that girl's name Sophie Schoen?" he demanded.

Josie gave a little shrug, saying: "As far as I'm concerned, her name's Yvonne."

"She looked just like a girl I knew at

business college," Alan told them. "She ran away from home, and they've been hunting for her."

The Captain glanced questioningly at Josie.

"Oh," she exclaimed with an impatient shake of the head, "as long as she's gone home, what does it matter what her name is!"

Angered by her perversity, yet understanding that some curious conception of underworld honor was involved, Alan stood looking for a moment into her defiant eyes; then, perceiving that her temper was wearing thin, and that further argument at this juncture would be futile, he turned on his heel, went to what had been the library, and called his grandfather.

"Good night, gentlemen," said the proprietress as the three moved out of the front door; to which Captain Murphy, pausing in the vestibule, replied:

"I think I better station a couple of my men on you, Josie, just to make sure."

"Suit yourself," she answered in a weary tone, and closed the door.

(With steadily increasing power this memorable novel progresses toward a strikingly dramatic climax—which will be described in the next, the August, issue.)

OUR DUMB FRIENDS

(Continued from page 56)

want to change the program?" asked Mr. Peters when she had finished.

Mrs. MacAlfy admitted that such had been her plan when she called him up.

"But they have probably got them printed by now," said Mr. Peters calmly.

"Oh, but they can change them. I know they can! Can't they have a man go over them and rub out the things that are to be altered, or even print the new ones right over them—in red?" she added in inspiration.

"They can have a man do anything you want with the programs, Mrs. MacAlfy," said Mr. Peters. "They can have a man come up from Dayton and make them into a flying-boat if you want. But, if you don't mind, before we stop the presses, it might be well if we had a meeting of the committee at my house late this afternoon. Do you think that we can arrange it?"

Mrs. MacAlfy, to whom any chance of an extra committee-meeting was just so much velvet, said that she would hurry around and see if she could get the members together for an emergency conference.

"An emergency conference," she repeated, with great relish.

AT five-thirty the emergency conference assembled at Mr. Peters'. Fortunately, everyone was there, stirred by the crisis. Mrs. Peters was upstairs crying.

"I have something that I want to show you," said Mr. Peters. "It may have some bearing on the entertainment. But in order for you to see it properly, it will be necessary for you all to line up against that wall, facing me."

It took some time for Mr. Peters to arrange the committee as he wanted it, the tallest at one end, tapering down to little Mr. Whass on the other. But once they were in order, it was but the work of a moment for Mr. Peters to explode the powder on the tray—powder that Mr. Whass had taken for cigar ashes. At the same time Mr. Peters raised his own protective gas-mask with his other hand. The victims of the soporific gas slept peacefully for forty-eight hours.

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Department of Education

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33 West 42nd Street, New York City

TWO FLIGHTS UP

(Continued from page 92)

deplorable condition, and opposed to him the District Attorney, newly shaven, rested and carefully dressed, had an advantage he was quick to feel.

"All right, Warrington. Come in." And when he had sat down: "Well, you've had time to think. How about it?"

"I've had time to think, but that's about all."

"We don't claim to run a first-class hotel," said Phelps comfortably. "Still, you must have come to some sort of a conclusion."

"I have, to this extent. I've got a right to an attorney, and before I make any statement I want advice."

"That's up to you. If you're innocent, you've got every chance, here and now, to come clean on the story. If you're guilty, you'd better get an attorney, because you're going to need one."

"I'll have the attorney," he said doggedly. The District Attorney sat back in his chair and eyed him keenly.

"Would it make any difference in your attitude," he said, "if I told you Mrs. Bayne died last night?"

Warrington leaped to his feet. "Dead!" he cried. "Dead! Good God!" He swayed as he held to the back of his chair. "Well, that's that," he said unsteadily.

"So it does make a difference?"
"I don't know," he said. "I don't know. I guess it ends it; that's all."

"Ends what?"
He made no reply. Hope was dead in him; there would be no confession now from Mrs. Bayne, no anything. If he claimed now that it was the dead woman who had given him the bond, they would laugh at him. Even Holly could not swear to that; she had had only his word for it. Holly! He steadied himself.

"I suppose I couldn't go up there?" he asked, after what seemed a long time. "You see, I've been like part of the family, in a way. I wouldn't like her—like them—to think I'm not—interested."

"And incidentally to find out where you are, eh? Maybe to see Cox and—"

"Oh, damn Cox!" he shouted suddenly. "What do I care about Cox? I don't care if I never see him again. I've got a right to go, haven't I? Look at me! I haven't seen a razor for two days. I need linen. I don't suppose you'll lock me up indefinitely without any clothes, will you?"

He looked disreputable, tortured. His absurd anti-climax was an appeal, shouted in furious tones.

"We don't want any more tricks, Warrington."

"You let me go up there. After that you can boil me in oil, if you like."

They let him go. Watching him, Phelps was certain that the death of Mrs. Bayne marked some sort of crisis in the affair, but what that crisis might be, he had no idea.

"You talk it over with the daughter," he said. "If she's ready to swear on her oath that she gave you that bond to sell, and the suitcase later on, she can clear you. If she can't or won't do those things—"

"She never saw the bond. I've told you that."

Chapter Twenty-nine

TIMES, like the structure of society, change; and neighborhoods alter also. Holly could still remember her mother's horror when Simmons' grocery was established at the corner, and also that day, a year ago now, when the McCook family moved in at Ninety, across the street from

the Bayne house, and at once advertised for boarders.

Mrs. Bayne from that time on had behaved precisely as though Number Ninety had been eliminated from Kelsey Street. She still recognized Eighty-eight and Ninety-two, but there was, according to her view, no Ninety at all.

But Ninety, after the manner of such affairs, was extremely cognizant of Ninety-one.

"Stuck up things!" said Mrs. McCook. "Believe me, Clara, I'm sorry for them. They're that poor and dirty proud. Putting on all those airs, and like as not nothing to eat in the house."

But although she might pity and scorn them, her interest in them grew rather than abated. Especially was this the case after she had learned their story at the grocery store. The first visit or so of Furness Brooks she observed carefully, and one day she confided to Clara that:

"The girl over at Ninety-one has a fellow. Not much to look at, either."

"He's got a car," said Clara, as though that answered the objection.

AT seven-thirty in the morning it was Mrs. McCook's custom to take a broom, and stepping out of her front door, from there to survey her world. Not that it varied from day to day. At such and such a time Mr. Williamson would leave Number Eighty-seven, the morning paper tucked in his overcoat pocket, and start out on his campaign to see that widows and orphans were not left penniless, but were adequately protected by life-insurance. At such and such a time would the Moriarity boy run to Simmons' grocery for the bread his shiftless mother had forgotten the day before. Bright and early, too, her basket on her arm, Mrs. Kahn, at Ninety-five, would start for the Kosher butcher shop in the next block; and the front door of the Bayne house would open, and Holly, looking neither here nor there, would brush off the front steps.

But on one never-to-be-forgotten morning Holly looked across the street and smilingly nodded to her. If a queen in a gilded coach had leaned out and bowed to her, she could not have felt more thrilled. It was only a day or so after that that she heard Mrs. Bayne was ill, and that Holly had telephoned from the grocery for the doctor. That afternoon she baked a cup custard, and putting it on her best plate, carried it across the street.

When Mrs. Bayne herself opened the door, she almost dropped it.

"I heard you were sick," she said. "I just thought—it's custard. It's kind of light and nourishing."

"That was very thoughtful of you. But I'm quite well now," said Mrs. Bayne.

"You might as well take it. I haven't got any use for it," said Mrs. McCook, holding out the plate.

And Mrs. Bayne had taken it, very graciously.

"That terrible woman!" she said later to Holly. "She just wouldn't let me refuse it."

"Why on earth should you, Mother? You wouldn't resent a card of sympathy, or flowers."

"But food! I won't have her running in and out."

"I don't think it would ever occur to her," said Holly, with slightly heightened color, and let it go at that.

On the same night, then, that James Cox had tried to drown his misery in bad bootleg liquor, at about two o'clock, the McCook door-bell rang and Mrs. McCook sat up in bed and prodded her husband.

"There's the telegram, Joe," she said. Her sister was expecting her first confinement, and Mrs. McCook had been on pins and needles, as she said to Clara, for the last week.

But Joe was heavily asleep, and at last she herself got out of bed and in her nightgown went down the stairs. At first when she opened the door she saw nobody; then, looking down, she discovered a figure crouching on the doorstep.

"For mercy's sake!" she said, peering down. "Who is it?"

The figure stirred and rose. "It's Holly Bayne," it said in a lifeless voice. "Have you a telephone? The grocery's closed."

"What's the matter? Who's sick?"

"It's my mother. I think—I think she's dead."

"Most likely she's just fainted," said Mrs. McCook reassuringly. "You wait a minute, and I'll come right over."

She did not go back upstairs. She picked up an overcoat from the hall and threw it over her night-dress, and thrust her bare feet into a pair of overshoes.

"Nobody'll see me," she said. "And a bad faint aint to be fooled with. Did you lay her flat?"

"She was flat," said Holly in her strange crushed voice.

"Believe me or not," Mrs. McCook told Clara the next morning, "I knew the minute I went in that door, that it wasn't a faint. I'm queer that way. I could smell death."

And death it was.

Mrs. Bayne lay in the attic almost as she had fallen; the candle had burned low, and in its small and dying blaze her figure looked larger, more majestic than in life. It seemed to fill the attic room.

She lay almost as she had fallen, but not quite. Holly had turned her over—so that now her quiet face was toward the light—and had thrown a blanket over her. And she had replaced the boards! Mrs. McCook, kneeling beside the body, was directly over them.

Mrs. McCook touched the forehead; then she got up.

"You'd better come downstairs, honey," Mrs. McCook said, gently. "I'll get Joe over, and you just leave the rest to me."

"Is she—"

"I'm afraid so, honey."

HOLLY sat once more in the chair by the dying fire. It did not matter to her that heavy footsteps passed the door, that in that hour strangers were moving about the house and she herself was alone. Nothing mattered but the incredible fact that her mother was dead, and that she herself had killed her.

It was the shock that had done it—the discovery that the suitcase was gone. A little care, and she need never have had that shock. Some other way, any other way than the one she had taken, and she might have saved her.

The heavy footsteps were coming down the attic stairs again. They stopped on the third floor, and she knew they were laying her in Margaret's room. After a time the door opened and Mrs. McCook came in. She turned on the lights and mended the fire, and then smoothed back the bed.

"You better come and crawl right in here, honey," she said. "Joe's attending to things. We're not going home."

"Not there," said Holly, and shuddered. "I'll get dressed."

Later on she insisted on going upstairs. The lights were on full in Margaret's room, and her mother lay on the bed. Holly had hardly ever seen her in Margaret's room before. It was as though she did not belong there. She made it look shabby.

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"She looks nice and peaceful," said Mrs. McCook.

Holly went quietly out again and stood, with Mrs. McCook at her elbow, outside of Howard Warrington's room, gazing in. A faint odor of tobacco still hung in the air. But she did not go in. He had left her, abandoned her. She was all alone.

In the early morning somebody got word to Margaret, and she came. She showed very little grief, very little anything. She kissed Holly, and then stood erect and took off her hat.

"I guess I'm back to stay," she said. "James has left me."

After that, time had gone on. There was stealthy movement in the house; some one—Clara perhaps—came in and drew down the window-shades to give the house the proper air of decorous mourning. Margaret, red-eyed and speechless, brought in a tape measure and said something about a black dress. Holly stood up to be measured obediently, and even remote Margaret had been somehow touched.

"I wouldn't grieve so," she told her. "She didn't suffer."

Holly let it go at that. How could she say it was remorse and not grief?

Some time that morning the door opened and Mrs. McCook slipped in.

"Your young man's outside," she told her, with the air of one bringing glad tidings; and a moment later Furness was inside the door looking at her.

"I've just heard," he said. "Can I do anything, Holly?"

"I think everything's being done."

He was still wary and a little afraid of her. He came over to the hearth and stood looking down at her.

"I'm sorry. You know that, don't you?" She nodded.

"Would you like me to stay with you?"

"I think I'm better alone," she said, "if you don't mind, Furness. I just can't talk."

"You'd rather I'd go, then?" She nodded once more.

BUT he did not go at once. He took a turn or two around the room in growing irritation.

"I'm damned if I understand you," he said. "I don't want to make a fuss, just now, anyhow. But if the moment you get into trouble you want to get rid of me, what on earth are you going to do when you're married to me?"

The unconscious humor of that escaped them both.

"I don't think," she said painfully, "that I'm going to marry you, Furness."

"What?"

"I don't think I can. I've tried. I can't go through with it."

"Look here," he said. "You're hysterical. You don't know what you're saying. Let's wait for a day or two, until all this is over."

"I know perfectly well what I'm saying. I hate it, but I must."

"But—the thing's announced! It's—it's as good as done."

"Oh, no, it isn't. I don't like to do it, Furness. She wanted it, and—I would like to do it for her. But there's somebody else."

He was stupefied, hit in his weakest part—his vanity.

"Somebody else! That's not true, and you know it. Why, you don't know anybody else."

But her eyes met his honestly and fearlessly. "I've told you," she said. "There is somebody else."

He went closer to her and looked down at her, with hostile eyes that showed a sudden comprehension.

"It's not that fellow upstairs!" he said. "The roomer, or whatever he is?"

She nodded, and suddenly he threw back his head and laughed. The sound echoed through the room and out into the quiet house.

"The roomer!" he said. "Oh, my God!" And flung out of the room and out of the house.

She would have felt sorry, had she been capable of feeling anything. As it was, his going left her with nothing but a sense of relief. After a long time she saw his ring still on her finger, and she got up and laid it on her mother's bureau; the sight of the small familiar objects, the toilet-waters, the old ivory brushes, the smelling-salts, brought the first tears she had shed.

Margaret found her weeping and coaxed her into her own blue-and-white bedroom and into bed. She fell asleep there finally, and Margaret drew the shades and closed the door.

She was asleep when Warrington and the detective arrived.

Chapter Thirty

IT was a portion of the decorum of death, to Mrs. McCook, like drawn windows and a closed piano, that door-bells must not be rung. Attired in her best black, therefore, she lurked in the lower hall, and any arrivals found the door mysteriously and slowly opening before them, while she herself remained behind it out of sight.

In this manner she admitted Warrington and the detective; but once inside, she recognized the former and condescended to mournful speech.

"Terrible, isn't it?" she said. "I guess Miss Bayne will be glad to see you. It's a pity you weren't here last night."

"Was she alone?"

"Yes. The mother had been sick all day, and about two in the morning, while the poor girl was asleep, she took a notion to go up to the attic. Of all places! And Miss Bayne found her there, dead."

"In the attic!" Warrington repeated after her. He was hardly conscious that he had spoken; his mind was busy with the picture the words conjured up. She had gone to the attic and found the suitcase gone, and so she had died. It was horrible.

He glanced at the detective, but that gentleman had apparently not been listening. He had moved to the drawing-room door and was surveying it, noiselessly whistling between his teeth.

"Who is with Miss Bayne?"

"Mrs. Cox is up there somewhere. I'll get her if you like."

"Never mind; I'll go up," he said.

The officer made no objection. He moved to the foot of the staircase and watched him out of sight, and after that he went back, rather to Mrs. McCook's astonishment, and examined the rear of the house. He located the servants' staircase, and leaving a door open, took up a position which commanded it. Only then, did he speak.

"So she was found in the attic?" he said. "What do you suppose took her up there, at that hour of the night?"

MARGARET was sewing in the front room, with the door open. She had the black material for Holly's frock in her lap, and the face she raised as Warrington stopped in the doorway was colorless and set. Involuntarily she dropped her work and clenched her left hand.

"Don't make a noise," she said. "Holly's asleep."

"Asleep!" he said blankly. "But I came to see her. I only have a little time."

"I'm not going to waken her. She's had more than any human being ought to bear."

"Yes," he agreed; "yes, I suppose so. I had hoped—how is she?"

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"As well as could be expected," said Margaret briefly, and picked up her work again. He stood inside the door, saying nothing, merely facing this new disappointment. "If she awakens before I go, will you tell her I'm here?" he said.

"Oh! So you're going again!" said Margaret bitterly. "Well, maybe it's better. I must say you haven't brought us any luck. Any of us. If you'd used some common sense—"

Her resentment against him rose. She put down her work and got up, two bright spots of color in her sallow cheeks.

"I've lost my husband," she told him, "and he's lost the thing he cared for most in the world. More than he cared for me. His good name. I suppose you didn't mean any harm, but God protect us from the blundering fools who wreck us and didn't mean to."

She went out of the room, leaving him there, and he heard her go along the back passage. There followed the opening and closing of the door, and he knew that she had locked herself away from him.

He squared his shoulders and went out into the hall. The detective was at the foot of the stairs, and with a gesture Warrington signaled that he was going on up. As he climbed, he heard the officer's heavy deliberate tread behind him. It irritated nerves already strained to the utmost, and the search he made of Warrington's room for a possible concealed weapon drove him almost to frenzy.

"Oh, get the hell out of here and let me clean up!" he said. "I don't own a gun, and I'm not going to jump out of a window."

Nevertheless the detective stood by until he had seen him go into the bathroom and turn on the shower. Then he very deliberately locked him in, put the key in his pocket and started on certain investigations.

He found the attic staircase without difficulty and climbed it with a certain caution; and once up, he stood in the semi-obscure of the garret room and gave it a general survey. At first, however, it told him nothing. A blanket, lying carelessly on the floor, spoke of the last night's tragedy, and a candlestick on a cedar chest, the candle burned to the socket. But there was nothing else.

THE detective resumed his noiseless whispering through his teeth. The usual litter of such places surrounded him, a broken chair or two, boxes and trunks. Nothing, apparently, to bring Mrs. Bayne up here at two in the morning from a sick-bed.

Yet she had come. She had come up with a candle and set the candle on the chest there. Had she brought up the blanket also, or had they thrown it over her later? The place was cold. Damned cold.

He picked up the blanket, and a small shining object fell to the floor and lay there in the dust. It was a silver nail-file. He picked it up, and stood speculatively surveying it. So she'd brought up a nail-file, too. That was queer. A nail-file, at two in the morning!

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to be opened, near the candle. There was a trunk there, but it was unlocked. He threw the lid back, and saw folded away in it old silk and satin gowns, and a bit of brocade. A heavy odor of camphor rose from it, and he closed the lid.

"Wrong!" he said out loud. No nail-file was needed to open that.

He moved on, and a board slipped under his foot. Like a cat he was down on his knees, lighting a match. This was more like it. A file, of course, to lift the end of a board! And now again, a file to lift the end of a board. It came up in his hand. He lighted another match and leaning over, proceeded carefully to examine the cavity beneath.

He was still noiselessly whistling. . . .

Later on, he took his prisoner down the stairs again. The house was very quiet. Holly still slept the sleep of exhaustion in her blue and white room, and Margaret was not visible.

Warrington stopped on the second floor landing, with a queer look on his face; then he drew himself up and went on down. In the lower hall the dog knew him and leaped at him joyfully. It was at once his hail and farewell.

Chapter Thirty-one

JAMES COX sat in the District Attorney's outer office. He had sat there, more or less, all day. Every now and then he paid a visit to the ice-water cooler in the hall, but he did not go out for food. He could not remember when he had eaten, and he did not care.

The ignominy of his arrest for drunkenness and his reprimand that morning before a magistrate had hardly affected him. He had brushed it aside, already forgotten it. Since the morning of his arrest in the store, his single-tracked mind had been concentrated on one problem; the world that moved about him was one of shadowy figures, which went about on trivial matters, ate, drank, walked, ran, loved and perhaps grieved, but unimportantly.

Thus it happened that he had brushed aside the minor incident of the night before. An event which would normally have stupefied him hardly entered the realm of his consciousness. He remembered indeed only vaguely any of the incidents leading up to it. He knew he must have walked most of the day, for his feet felt blistered; and he had a fairly clear recollection of making a decision to go back to Margaret, to seek comfort with her, even if she had lied to him.

But when he had gone back, at six o'clock, the apartment was dark. There was no Margaret, no table laid with good honest linen, no odor of broiling chops and coffee, no anything.

He had not even switched on the lights. He had simply turned and gone on out again.

Sometime later—he had lost all count of time—he had been standing on one of the bridges. He didn't remember which bridge. He was standing there thinking and looking over, and a policeman, after watching him awhile, told him to move on. Yes, he remembered that, for it must have been then that that fellow from the china department came along and took him by the arm.

"You come with me, Cox," he said. "You're too much a man for that sort of thing. Come on, and we'll have a drink."

They had gone somewhere. It was bright and warm, and he hadn't eaten anything for a long time. He guessed he'd taken a lot of whisky, but he felt all right when he left. It hadn't really hit him hard until he was almost home. Then it had got him in the legs.

Well, maybe that could happen to any-

body; he didn't know, and he didn't much care. He was going to see the District Attorney if he had to sit in that chair for a month.

At four o'clock he was admitted to the inner office. Phelps had spent most of the day in court, and now he too was tired. He wanted to go home, and bathe and shave, and maybe after dinner listen to the radio and doze in his chair. His tone was impatient when he looked up and saw James.

"All right, Cox," he said. "Get to it quickly. I've had a hard day."

James remained standing. Now that his moment had come, he found difficulty in rising to it.

"I'm a salaried man, Mr. District Attorney," he said, thinking out his words. "Or I was. I suppose if I were what you'd call a gentleman, maybe I wouldn't be doing what I am about to do, sir. It goes against the grain even with me."

The District Attorney smiled.

"I'm a salaried man myself," he said. "Let's let that go just now. What is it you are about to do?"

"I'm about to accuse a woman," said James. "That's a thing I've never done before in my life, and I hope to God I'll never have to again. I accuse my wife's sister, Tom Bayne's wife, of knowing about that stuff in the house, and of taking a bond from it and selling it."

"And you also know she is dead and can't defend herself," said Phelps, with sudden sharpness. "Come, Cox! That won't do unless you have proof."

But James was staring at him with shocked incredulous eyes.

"Dead!" he said thickly. "Since when?"

"Since last night."

James slowly lowered himself into a chair, and Phelps watched him.

"See here," he asked him, "haven't you been home? Didn't you know this?"

"I haven't been home," said James with difficulty. "I walked the streets all yesterday, and last night I drank too much whisky and the police picked me up. And I came here from the hearing this morning. I've been here all day."

HE got up and picked up his hat, now dirty and battered.

"Well," he said, "I guess I've gone the limit. I can't accuse a dead woman. I didn't like her, but she can rest in peace for all of me."

"I have an idea what you've come to say won't disturb her," said Phelps dryly. "You've made a statement. How do you propose to support it?"

"I'm telling you. She took it. I knew it all along. My wife lied to me when she said it was the girl."

"How do you know that?"

"How does any man know when his wife is lying to him? They thought I didn't notice it, but I did. It was night before last, when the fellow who rooms there came in to see what all the trouble was about. My wife told me it was the girl who had found the suitcase and sold the bond, and he didn't like that. He knew better. I saw him look at her."

"Why did your wife tell you that?"

"I figure she knew, if it was the mother, I'd use that information."

"So you claim they were all protecting Mrs. Bayne?"

"That's about the size of it."

"But why has Warrington kept his mouth shut, if that's the case?"

James looked up, candidly.

"I suppose because he's a gentleman. That's what I meant before."

"Where do you get that idea?" Phelps asked shrewdly. "From your wife?" And when James made no reply: "How long have you known this Warrington?"

"Never saw him but once before. He brought me a message from my wife. She wasn't my wife then."

"Do you remember that date?"

"I do," said James sturdily. "If I'm wrong, you'll find it on record at the station house in Number Three precinct. I hit a policeman that night."

THE District Attorney sat at his desk for some time after James had gone out. Then he got his hat and coat, and on his way out, he stopped in to see the chief of detectives.

"I've got something I'd like done tonight, if possible," he told him. "Tom Bayne is dying, and I'd like somebody to go to the pen and get a deposition from him. I want to know when his wife visited him last, and if he told her about the suitcase."

The chief smiled.

"Sure," he said. "I'll send Lyell. But he told her, all right; I can tell you that now."

He opened the desk drawer and carefully brought out two small objects which he laid on the blotter.

"Exhibits A and B," he said genially. "Lyell took Warrington up this morning, and learned Mrs. Bayne died in the attic. So he locked the fellow off somewhere and took a look around. He found the nail-file on the floor; she'd lifted the boards with it. And under the boards, where she'd dropped it, the handkerchief."

"That doesn't prove she'd used them, of course. Anybody else—"

"Who? The girl? There was no one else in the house last night. And the girl hadn't been up there for anything; she knew the suitcase was gone. She'd sent it out of the house. Everybody concerned knew that suitcase wasn't there, except this woman. And why did she go? She went because she needed more money. She'd lost a pocketbook yesterday with several hundred dollars in it, and she was up against it. And if you ask me where she got several hundred dollars to lose, I'll tell you. She got it from Warrington when he sold that bond for her."

On his way out home in his car, the District Attorney thought it over. He was fairly sure now that he had been off on the wrong foot, and it annoyed him. But after a time, like poor Annie Bayne in her taxicab, he fell asleep. He had had a hard day.

That evening, while he was sitting comfortably by the radio, not so much listening to it as using it as a musical accompaniment to a book he was reading, the telephone rang, and he yawned and answered it. It was Lyell on long distance. Tom Bayne was dead. He had passed away comfortably an hour or so ago, but before he had done so, he had made his statement.

"Looks like we've been barking up the wrong tree," was Lyell's comment.

"Yeah," said Mr. Phelps, yawning, and hung up the receiver.

He went back to his book and the radio, which was now singing, "Oh, Promise Me" in a throaty soprano. But before he settled down, he took an old envelope out of his pocket and wrote two words on it as a reminder for the next day.

"Cox—Warrington."

Chapter Thirty-two

HOWARD WARRINGTON was released the next day. There were neither apologies nor explanations. Simply the closed hand of the law opened and released him. He was free.

For all the change that the last forty-eight hours had made on the surface, they might never have been. The office greeted him with grins and cheerful badinage. Out-

side of that, so little had he counted there, that his absence had been scarcely noted.

"I'm just reporting," he told Miss Sharp. "I can't stay. There's been a death in the family where I live."

"I thought you looked kinda shot," said that young woman. "You just go along. I'll fix it."

But as he started out, she called him back. "Say, Mr. Baylie's got that suit of yours. Do you want to take it along?"

"I'll get it tomorrow," he told her, and made his escape.

So it happened that Warrington and James Cox, who had suffered most through her, helped to carry Annie Bayne to her quiet grave. And later they went back together to Kelsey Street, where the heavy odor of flowers still filled the air, and the rooms had been only hastily restored to their usual order.

"I hope you'll not hold against me, what I said the other night," said James.

"You weren't half as violent as I would have been under the circumstances," Warrington assured him. And that was all.

There was a family conference in the dining-room that night, but Warrington was not a party to it. Only Holly could have brought him into it, and Holly was still dazed. He was not hurt; after all, what was he to them? For a little time he had been one of them, had lived and suffered with them; but now that was all over.

BY that small unconscious omission they put him where he knew he belonged, in his third-floor room again, in the household but not of it. And as time went on, and James made his genial efforts to draw him into the family circle, it was he who held off. If there was some pride in it at first, it became sheer self-defense later on.

He could not see Holly in her black frocks, looking thin and white, without wanting to take her in his arms. And he would not do that; he would not drag her once more into poverty. She had had enough of that, and of the things it sometimes led to. She was comfortable now. Let her alone.

Certainly she was comfortable. With the coming of James and Margaret to live in the old house, it began to take on a new if slightly vulgar vitality. The furnace roared under James' mighty wielding of the shovel; lights blazed; and Warrington, putting his key into the lock, would be met sometimes by the smell of frying onions, and on passing the drawing-room door would find James there, in Mrs. Bayne's old chair, his feet on what had been the tea-table, and a cigar in his mouth.

"Come in, Howard!" he would call genially. "Come in and make yourself at home. Shove that dog off, there. He's too fat and lazy to move."

James secretly adored the dog.

Warrington went in sometimes. If Holly was not there, he would even stay a little, listening to James talk and even putting in a word now and then himself. But occasionally Holly would be there, very quiet and very conscious of him, and then he would take himself in hand and resolutely go upstairs. If James ever noticed this, he made no comment.

James was very happy. He was enormously proud, of his wife, of Holly, and especially of the house. He would take the dog out for walks, and using that as an excuse, stand on the pavement and survey the building complacently, feet apart and head held high.

Once Mrs. McCook found him on her side of the street, looking across.

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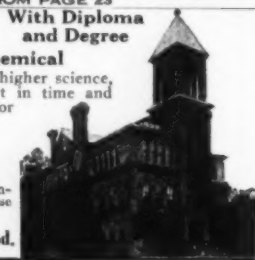
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He was constantly picking up bargains at the store and sending them home. And at last there came a truly great day, when he sent up a player-piano—twenty-five dollars a month on the installment plan. It came on Margaret's birthday, and he kept her downtown that afternoon. When she came in, she went directly upstairs, and the first she knew of it was when the strains of some popular air arose to her overhead. "Mercy!" she said to Holly. "Who on earth ever let that hurdygurdy into the house?"

AFTER that, James spent a great deal of his leisure time at the piano, with a cigar in his mouth and his eyes peering at the punctured roll which was unwinding before him. He pumped vigorously with his feet, and the faster the time, the better he was pleased.

"That's got some go to it," he would say. But one evening when he was playing some sentimental thing or other, and had a sore foot so that he had to play it softly, he looked up to hear Warrington closing the front door and to see tears in Holly's eyes. That set him to thinking, and that night while Margaret was brushing her hair, he spoke to her peevishly.

"What's the matter between Howard and Holly?" he demanded. "They're like a pair of shuttlecocks! When one's in, the other's out! It isn't natural. Have they quarreled about something?"

"I don't think so. Why?" "Well, I can't make them out. If Holly isn't crazy about him, after all he did for her! And as for him, where are his eyes, anyhow? I've a good notion to up and tell him."

"You let them alone," said Margaret. "They'll work it out some way."

And for a considerable time James did let them alone. When he could stand it no longer, he devised small innocently obvious schemes to throw them together, but without much result. For instance, he would stand down in the lower hall and bellow up to the third floor.

"Hi—Warrington!" he would yell. "Put down that book and come on to the movies. Hurry up!"

And sometimes Warrington went. The desire to sit next to Holly in the warm darkness was too much for him. They would sit side by side, saying little or nothing, and sometimes one or the other would lean a bit to one side, and there would be for an instant a sense of contact that warmed and thrilled them both.

And then James, sturdily holding Margaret's hand, would shift his position and glance over at them, and they would straighten self-consciously and miserably.

Once James caught Holly in the hall looking up, after Howard had disappeared above, and he put a hand on her shoulder.

"See here, sister," he said. "If you like him, why don't you let him see it? I think he's darned unhappy, myself."

And she had looked at him with her direct and honest eyes.

"Why should he care for me?" she asked him. "I used him; we all used him. I don't see how he can bear to look at me." "Well, I do," said James stoutly. "And as for the other matter, that's all water over the dam now. He's none the worse for it, is he?"

There came, however, a terrible day, when James came home to find a car in front of the house, and in the drawing-room a tall young man with prominent eyes and a rather pasty skin. The door was open, and James stopped there and gave the visitor a long hard look. Then he stamped back to Margaret in the pantry.

"Who's that in the parlor with Holly?" he demanded.

Margaret was looking worried. "It's Furness Brooks again," she said. "Really, I don't know why he came. I thought that—where are you going, James?" "Don't worry about me, my girl," he said loftily. And he went up the stairs. He walked into Warrington's room without the ceremony of knocking, passed that morose and brooding young gentleman without a word, and stalked across to a window. "Come here," he said. "Look down there. Do you know whose car that is?" "I know it. What about it?" "Well!" said James. "What are you going to do? Sit here belly-aching, or go down and throw him out?" "What's the good of either, if she wants him?" "She doesn't want him!" James roared. "Not any more than she wants the smallpox. She's thrown him over once. But if he hasn't the guts to stay away, and you haven't the guts to keep him away, I'm through."

"I'm not asking any woman to share poverty with me."

"Oh, you're not, eh?" said James. "Too proud, aren't you? Well, by and large, there's been too much pride in this house already, and I'm about sick of it!" And he stamped out again.

It was about two days later that James imparted to Margaret an astonishing bit of news.

"I've asked Mr. Steinfeldt up to dinner tomorrow night," he said.

"Mr. Steinfeldt!" said Margaret weakly, and sat down. "Why on earth, James?"

"Why shouldn't I?" he said. "He did me a favor, when I'll tell the world I needed it. And I had a talk with him today. We'll have Warrington, too."

"You've got something in your mind. What is it?"

"You leave that to me, my girl," he told her.

"He'll never go into the store."

"Who said he was going into the store?" James demanded. "You get out that clover-leaf design I sent up the other day and attend to your job. I'll attend to mine."

MR. STEINFELDT came. He drank the cocktail James shook up for him, praised the dinner and even noticed the tablecloth.

"One of our patterns, isn't it?" he asked. And James glowed.

"It is," he said. "You can't beat us for linens, Mr. Steinfeldt. Quality and looks."

Mr. Steinfeldt sat back at last, and lighting a cigar, gazed with approval at Holly.

"Well, young lady!" he said. "And the last time I saw you, you were trying to make out you wanted to go to jail! And I didn't believe you, did I? We put in that nice young man beside you, instead!" He eyed her shrewdly. "And because he was a gentleman, he said nothing and went, eh? It was a very fine thing to do."

"A very fine thing," said Holly unsteadily.

"And now," said Mr. Steinfeldt, leaning back comfortably, "if I was a young lady, and a young gentleman did a thing like that for me, a nice personable young man too, I would think: 'I better make up to him, somehow.' What do you think?"

"Maybe he doesn't want me to," said Holly, her face scarlet.

Suddenly Margaret got up. "I think," she said, "if you are ready for your coffee—"

But nobody else moved. James sat complacently back in his chair, and Warrington faced Mr. Steinfeldt, his hand closing over Holly's as he spoke.

"That's not the question, Holly," he said steadily. "If it's a question of wanting—" He released her hand again and addressed Mr. Steinfeldt. "I hadn't expected the thing

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to be brought up like this," he said, "but since it has—"

Mr. Steinfeldt beamed.

"Since it has, we might as well go through with it. Holly here knows I—care for her. I always have, since I've known her. I always will. There can never be anybody else. But I'm not in a position to marry, and I don't know when I will be. She can do better, and I think she should."

Mr. Steinfeldt looked at Margaret, standing outraged and disapproving at the end of the table.

"Sit down, Mrs. Cox," he said. "Why hurry and spoil a good meal? I might get indigestion, and forget what I came to say."

But he did not forget what he had come to say. Leaning over the table now, his keen face alert, ashes over the front of his coat, he put his proposition. He didn't think much of the bond-business, either way; nothing in it for the salesman, and too little for the investor. Give him good common stock, every day in the week. But he knew a good house which needed a manager for the bond-department, and he could land that job for Warrington, and would, on one condition.

"And that condition?" Warrington asked, none too steadily.

"They'd kinda like a married man," said Mr. Steinfeldt, and leaning back again, bit off the end of a fresh cigar.

There was silence in the room. James still sat back, faintly smiling. Honest James—wily James, crafty James. Margaret's eyes being off him, he furtively took a bit of cake and gave it to the dog, underneath the tablecloth.

"Sounds like a nice easy condition to me," he observed.

Warrington sat very still. Then he reached over and gently took Holly's hand once more.

"I'll take your position, Mr. Steinfeldt," he said huskily, "if the young lady here will take your advice."

And then Mr. Steinfeldt proved himself to be truly a diplomat. He removed his napkin, quality and looks, from its anchorage in a buttonhole of his waistcoat, pushed back his chair, and rose.

"It's a fine house you've got here, Cox," he said. "Maybe Mrs. Cox and you would show me around a bit. After you, Mrs. Cox."

They went out, and the door closed. Warrington watched them go, and then turned and took Holly in his arms.

THE END

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

(Continued from page 45)

actually cease to be worries. Stephen remembered occasions on which he had turned from women like the women of his family, to regard with hungry eyes the women who waited upon them. Black-clad waitresses, shop-girls—any woman sobered by the necessity of earning a living.

"Meestar Londreth," said Jean Laplace, using the title scrupulously, although for years he had been begged not to do so, "you know that cow—that brockle-face milch cow—that clumsy cow? She down again in the snow."

Cows, yes!

None the less, seen in that quiet generous atmosphere, Molly's present problem did not seem to Stephen altogether insurmountable, even well as he knew his father and other near relatives. This time she had, for a wonder, right on her side, and her suggestions were intelligent if precautions were taken to prevent her future husband from gaining entire control of her money. Perhaps, after all, such a marriage would settle her down. The present letter was not as worrying as most. Undoubtedly, Molly had also written to her parents, and Stephen hoped that by the time he got East, the matter would be settled without the necessity for any talk on his part.

He wasn't going to interfere if he could help it. Not he.

AS usual, however, and despite all his cool calculations, he did talk the night of his arrival—if talking is the right word to describe his rushing yet halting method of speech. A trifle stuttering when excited, spoken with tense lips and jaws, as if he wished to overcome with precision his shyness. Only when he was angry, forgetting himself completely, could he speak without hesitation.

Now, standing in front of the fireplace in the sitting-room after dinner, warming the back of his legs and, at intervals, his hands clasped behind him, cracking his knees, he was wondering why his father and mother hadn't mentioned Molly's predicament. Their silence made him impatient and fearful.

"Don't do that, Stephen," said his mother abruptly, in her quick voice. "One lump?"

She was sitting at Stephen's right in a

big chair, a small table with a silver coffee-service on it in front of her. Her white hair, worn high from her forehead, was a soft cloud above her blue frosty eyes and thin highly colored cheeks. Her gown of black velvet fitted perfectly her slim, almost girlish figure. She was very handsome, Stephen thought; she must have been very beautiful when she was young.

He took out his cigarette-case and lighted a cigarette with the slight sense of guilt that still pursued him whenever he performed that simple act in the presence of his father. He always felt young and unmanly.

"Ha-have one, Father?" he asked, extending his case. "Mother?"

Mr. Londreth, on Stephen's left, also in a big chair, shook his head contemptuously. "No, I never use them. Hand me that box of cigars from the book-shelf."

Mr. Londreth was dressed in dinner clothes. He didn't like dinner clothes, but his wife made him wear them. He didn't like anything very much except his wife. His long, sawtooth face—almost yellow—framed by small grizzled closely clipped side-whiskers that came down to the middle of his ears, and broken horizontally by a short mustache, regarded Stephen without expression. His black eyes were fathomless. He did not understand Stephen. He no sooner forgave him for a new foulard tie, than he had to condemn him for a slight and stuttering irreverence.

Stephen completed his errand and held his case out again to his mother. She selected a cigarette, and Stephen bent over her with a flaming match, almost upsetting the coffee-pot. A person usually did upset a coffee-pot or some other similar contrivance, when assisting Mrs. Londreth to light a cigarette. She was not expert.

"Good work," murmured Stephen encouragingly, and regained his former position. He looked at his father with a sidelong glance. He did not feel as encouraged as he had felt in Wyoming three weeks earlier.

"H-heard from M-Molly lately?"

Mr. Londreth did not answer.

"Yes," said his mother.

"Wh-what did she have to say?"

Mrs. Londreth leaned forward and knocked an invisible ash from her cigarette into a used coffee-cup, with most people a gesture of thoughtful dissent.

"It is the same thing, Stephen," she announced coldly, leaning back again. And then, with the intuition that always frightened Stephen and upset his best-laid plans: "I suppose you got a letter too, of course. Well, no matter, your father can't be bothered. We have discussed it thoroughly. There is no use bringing it up."

Stephen had a momentary impulse to let the subject drop. Molly was old enough to take care of herself. His lips were dry with the dread that the prospect of a discussion with his family always aroused in him, but a warm feeling of shame ran through his veins.

"I th-think we ought to consider it," he suggested.

His father's black eyes narrowed. "It's not my affair. I give her an adequate allowance."

"For what?"

"To live on."

"Plea-pleasantly?"

"That is no concern of mine."

STEPHEN, for all his hatred of words, launched into argument, feeling like a man who, trying to put out a bonfire, suddenly decides to let it burn. "But i-it is," he stuttered, "—that is, if you can afford it, sir. Can you? I—I—I'm not defending Molly—I know what she is about money; but if you have it, why not let her live happily as well as just merely live? What's money for, anyhow?"

"Not to give to a spendthrift who's wrecked her life."

"She didn't wreck it. It—it was wrecked for her."

"Did we ask her to marry Orpen? She's made her bed; let her lie on it."

Stephen became reckless.

"She didn't make her bed. How—how in heaven's name did she know it was going to be a female dormitory?"

"Don't be indecent, Stephen."

"I'm not, Mother, but— Wait a moment, please. Let me finish. Here's a woman who really wants to settle down, and you—"

"Settle down!" Mr. Londreth scratched wearily his left side-whisker, and his eyes became more fathomless than ever. "Some rascal or other, or he wouldn't want her money."

"Well, again—I'm not defending foreign customs, but there they are. They seem pretty sensible to me, too."

Mrs. Londreth raised a slim hand, the palm outward, in a delicate gesture of silence.

"Not so loud," she begged. "The servants will hear you."

"Oh, well—what if they do? They know all about it, anyhow. Mother—Father,"—Stephen looked pleadingly from one to the other of the still figures,—"this is horribly important. You know Molly as well as I do, and you know what sort of a person she is. She—she's reached the careless age, too. People after thirty do lots of things they wouldn't do before. I tell you if she makes an ass of herself, we'll be responsible. We must—"

HE stopped upon an exclamation from his father. "You are outrageous, sir!" said Mr. Londreth, rising slowly from his chair. "Outrageous and impertinent. Your first night home, too. I will not argue with you. I do not see how it is any business of yours. You are not Molly's father. And while you are a guest in my house, you will obey the one rule I make—you will be a courteous gentleman."

For a moment Stephen met the contemptuous gaze with a gaze equally contemptuous. Then he lowered his eyes. "I'm sorry, sir," he said. But he was clearly and deeply angry now. His soft precise tones had no hesitation in their whatsoever.

Guest! Here again, as with Molly, who



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had first asked him, an unconsulted visitor, to enter this house? The muscles of his legs tightened. It seemed to him that never in his life, never, had he really tried to talk to any member of his family—save Molly possibly, and even with her not on the subject of money—without this feeling of fighting cobwebs, of defending himself against formless shadows; of having to waste strength in arguments that were not there to begin with. Without this choked desire to run, to run for miles—to run down the stairs and along the hall and out into cold air. To run bareheaded until the breath no longer came to his lungs. To ride a horse, to leap a ditch, to kiss an unknown girl—anything wild and casual.

Stephen was not given to analyzing deeply his emotions or actions, but he was aware that much of his history had consisted of attempts to escape from this dull witchcraft—to find at least a few moments when life smiled without envenomed thought and was empty of hard and careless voices. He had managed to forge for himself a fairly tough armor, but even now there remained chinks he had overlooked, the vulnerability of which surprised him when least expected; chinks through which pressed at times the old rusty dagger of pretentiousness, of moral cowardice, of a feeling that wealth and possessions meant more than their small intrinsic worth, purely auxiliary, deserved. Stephen was always immediately conscious of the dagger, but the thought that it could still touch him at all wounded him. "Wh-why," he told himself, "it—it's on account of these damn't things that I still stammer."

So it is not surprising after all, that the next day he went to New York.

Chapter Three

STEPHEN found it difficult to remember the time when he had not known Vizately. It seemed to him that always that curious man, half Pole, half Quaker, almost great, perhaps altogether great,—since who can tell about greatness?—had been to him a tower of refuge and a granary of advice. And yet in reality he had first seen Vizately only fifteen years before, when as an undergraduate—his second year in college—he had taken a course in Elizabethan Drama taught by Mr. Vizately, Chancellor Green Hall, No. 9, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 to 11 A. M.—"Mr." Vizately, after his own graduation from another university and several years in Europe, having been, somewhat to his personal puzzlement and eventual dismay, for three years an instructor in English.

Stephen's introduction had taken place in a small room—the same Chancellor Green Hall, No. 9, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays—undecorated save for twenty scarred desks arranged in four rows, a reading table at one end upon a platform raised a foot or so above the floor, and wide blackboards running around the room, blackboards still marked by the unpleasant and disturbing symbols in chalk of a previous class in mathematics. The two windows of the room were open, and through them could be caught a glimpse of trees and towers basking in the warm misty sunlight of late September. Stephen, in company with his fourteen companions, was at the moment filled with the vigorous laziness of youth and the unconscious determination to make life as unpleasant as possible for the strange young man who, on the dais at the other end of the room, was studying a book, his bowed head between his hands. One had a view of a large cranium, covered with fluffy cherubic hair, broad shoulders, big hands, and a hint of thick convex glasses.

A bell ceased tolling, and the young man got to his feet. He did not seem young to Stephen's nineteen years—he seemed fairly

mature; but he was young, twenty-eight. An enormous young man, with a round moon face, a determined mouth and shy brown eyes that nobody could see, hidden behind convex glasses that gave them an appearance of glittering truculence. He bowed, smiled, and began to speak in a rather high, slightly ironic, somewhat florid and beautifully precise voice. Stephen, being an American, did not altogether like the voice. He thought it affected. It was not until years later that he realized what a virtue a carefully cultivated voice is, and how much his nation suffered from carelessness in that respect. But before long his irritation was overcome by his pleasure in what the young man was saying. The young man was lifting his two clenched fists up and down in a flail-like sort of movement, and was speaking with an earnestness very different from the professional weariness of the average professor when confronted with strange undergraduate faces. Also his intentions were astonishingly human.

"And so, gentlemen," he concluded, "we are not college instructor and students; we're fellow-adventurers, fellow Canterbury Travelers; and the only difference is that by good luck, through no virtue of mine, for I'm just as much of an ass as the next fellow, I've managed to discover something extra, something plus, as it were: the fact that the mind is a muscle and that it's just as much fun to exercise it as it is to exercise the body. And I know something about muscles—I was a varsity guard when I was in college. Lungs that like fresh air, a mind that seeks the truth—between the two lie all the law and the prophets. Let's remember that, will you?"

Stephen saw more of him. Not so much that year, except in class, for he had the sophomore fear of being too attentive to a member of the faculty, but the two years following, when he was released by the spiritual and social freedom of upper-class dignity. He spent many hours in Vizately's small littered study, a study much too small for its owner, where an upright piano took up most of one wall. He got the habit of Vizately. He tramped the countryside with him. In the autumn when the New Jersey hills were a mass of flaming oak and sumac, and golden elms in empty valleys stood apart like gilded domes; in the winter when the fields were held by the damp dripping fog of the Middle States; in the spring when apple blossoms and pear broke like white spume upon the low hills. He read most of Vizately's books; he listened to Vizately play the piano. They were both young. At the moment Puccini seemed to them very great. They thrilled to "Madame Butterfly" and "La Bohème" and "Tosca."

Stephen was graduated, and Vizately left teaching and went to New York, where he got a job doing musical criticisms for a morning paper.

Stephen was not the only person who expected him to become immediately famous and was puzzled when he didn't. He did become distinguished. He acquired a certain high repute among intelligent people; his musical criticisms were thought by many to be the best in New York; he wrote occasional brilliant essays, and an unsuccessful novel; but despite his gusto, an intangible ironic laziness manifested itself, a desperate sort of amusement with his own pursuits and those of other people.

"It's so darned hard trying to tell the truth," he complained, "except in poetry, which few read and I can't write, or—possibly—in novels, which I can't write, either. It is so much more fun just to try to think about it with no chance of contradiction, or to speak about it where, at least, you get some chance for immediate rebuttal. Otherwise, you've got words that never suit and an audience that never understands, and for allies—if you don't want to be too lonely—

you have your choice between the rebels, who go mad, or the great mass of the people who never go anywhere. And the truth lies somewhere in between, I'm thinking. I've an idea it's a way-station between two big cities—the travelers pass it at sixty miles an hour, and the stay-at-homes never know its name. You are wise to have gone West, Stephen. In ten years or so, you'll be a thoughtful man."

And again:

"It's the devil being half Quaker and half Pole, and born an American. What the Pole thinks is beautiful the Quaker thinks is immoral, and the American isn't satisfied with the decisions of either. Choose your parents carefully, my son—it's the most important thing a man does."

VIZATELTY, hearing the bell of his apartment ring, looked up from the table where he was writing and with an absent-minded glance toward one corner of the room where a movable reading lamp on a tall stand shone upon the high unrevealing back of a leather chair, said: "Come in."

The bell rang again.

Vizately, who had at once become reabsorbed in the task before him, repeated, this time without raising his head and with equal inattention, the words he had spoken a moment before. Their effect remained negligible, for although the buzzing sound ceased, a knocking began. "Damn!" ejaculated Vizately, and flinging his pencil down upon the yellow tablet filled with indecipherable sentences upon which he had been concentrated, raised his considerable bulk and lumbered crossly toward the door, which was, as usual, locked. There was a slight look of sheepishness upon his face as he opened it.

Stephen, very resplendent in a fur-collared coat, his soft gray hat pulled down over his eyes, his baggage at his feet, stood in the hall.

Vizately's expression underwent a third change. "My long-lost lamb," he exclaimed, extending both hands, "from the wilds of the Rocky Mountains! When did you get back? If you'd only answer the excellent letters I send you once every six months or so, I'd know more about you. Come in."

"Did you get my telegram?"

"No."

He picked up both valises, and Stephen preceding him, pushed his way through the small dark vestibule toward the dim largeness of the room beyond, lit only by the double brass student lamp, adorned with saffron parchment shades, on the central table, and the movable reading lamp in the far corner. He paused on the threshold.

"Leave your things here," he said, "and I'll take the bags into the little room next to mine. Going to stay awhile?"

"A night or two, if I may."

"A night or two? Where then?"

"Panama, I think. Mexico, probably."

"Panama? Why Panama?"

Stephen was puzzled himself. The idea had only come to him that afternoon on the train. "Blue se-seas after snow, I guess. And then I hate dams so, I suppose I want to see a really b-big one."

Vizately had moved a step or so away, but now he paused and looked back. "You're not much more explanatory than you were as an undergraduate, are you, Stephen? Why do you hate dams so?"

Stephen started to hang up his coat and hat. "Be-cause they spoil so much good country, and most of the time don't do anything else. There—there's one trying to ruin my country now, but I think I have it licked. Damn't tiresome—no pun."

Vizately sighed. "Thanks for the full and clear explanation. I gather, however, that you can't get away from crowds and so-called progress even out West. Well, make yourself comfortable. I'll put these things away. Turn on more light if you want it."



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Stephen chuckled. "I don't want more light. I've just come from a house that's fu-*full* of light. . . . At least, my family thinks so."

He followed Vizately into the room and sank into a big chair near the table, while the ponderous shadow of his host disappeared with the two bags through a door leading to the bedrooms. Presently the ponderous shadow was back, standing before a sideboard that took up considerable wall-space directly opposite where Stephen was sitting.

"Have a drink?" asked the ponderous shadow. "Ginger ale, or sherry, or something?"

"Thanks," said Stephen. "Sherry."

HE took out a pipe, filled and lit it, and sinking farther into the recesses of his chair, looked about him. There was no sound but Vizately's slightly stertorous breathing, breathing which always alarmed his friends until they recalled his agility and perfect health.

Vizately was one of the few persons Stephen had ever met who, cherishing firmly the carefully winnowed ideas he thought were true, at the same time listened politely to the many ideas he thought were false.

"There's only one virtue, and that is compassion," he would say, "and there's only one sin, and that is cruelty. But both are wide—compassion even extends to not being witty, nine times out of ten."

Outside of the circles of soft light, concentrated in two places, the central table and the far corner, the dim outlines of book-cases reaching to the ceiling seemed to be waiting to advance definitely when further brilliance was vouchsafed. Beside them waited the glistening compactness of a small grand piano, a piece of brocade across its top, the twisted silver shadows of the dragons in a Chinese tapestry above the sideboard, the wan Italian faces of several portraits, some of them unframed, the self-contained squareness of etchings and drawings, and, on a stand near one of the two long windows now obliterated by heavy curtains, the little glimmering figure of a dancing faun in marble. And back of the bookshelves and the tapestry and the pictures, even less definite than they, were the cream-colored walls, and above these, the delicate plaster frieze of an interior built eighty years or so before. The room was rich and sober and orderly, as only the rooms of certain bachelors can be, save for the books that overflowed onto the tables and the floor.

Stephen sucked at his pipe; and then he started, for back of him, from the far corner where the tall reading-lamp stood beside the chair with a high leather back, had come the sound of a book being closed and the rustle of some one arising.

Stephen turned his head and immediately struggled to his feet. Standing by the tall lamp, her face indistinct but her slim small figure, clad in black, outlined by the falling rays, was a young woman. A very silent young woman.

Vizately turned at the same moment.

"Have something to drink, Mercedes?" he asked.

"Drink one for me, dearie," said the slim shape.

"Lord!" said Stephen to himself.

The girl yawned, stretched her arms, ran her hands through her short curly hair and walked slowly to the big table on the other side of which Stephen was standing.

"Gee," she said, "that's some book."

"What book?" asked Vizately. —"Oh, I'm sorry, Stephen. Stephen—that is, I mean to say, Miss Garcia, this is Mr. Londreth. Miss Garcia is one of the loveliest flowers of that rosebud garden of girls, the Irrationalities, Stephen; and Mr. Londreth, Mercedes, is one of our pioneers. One of our strong men from the Far West, where—"

"I—I know—know what you're going to say," stammered Stephen.

"Gosh, he's funny, isn't it?" observed Miss Garcia languidly to no one in particular.

Her vague voice sounded like a moth entering a rich quiet; her choice of words was as disturbing as the moth blundering against walls.

"I wasn't going to say anything of the kind," denied Vizately vigorously. "I was going to say that maybe he was a cowboy like Will Rogers. I'm incurably romantic. What book, Mercedes? And incidentally, I apologize, Stephen, for not introducing you before. But I never interrupt people when they are reading—not if I can help it. It is one of the few kind actions one can perform. Be more cordial, Mercedes darling. Speak to the gentleman. It isn't nice to exhibit your Irrationalities manner to an old friend of mine when you use me as a circulating library."

The girl looked at Stephen as if she were seeing him for the first time.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Mr.—er—"

"Lon-Londreth," said Stephen, flushing. He picked up a magazine and regained his chair. His rude neighbor, on her part, began to examine the pictures in another magazine. In a moment or so Stephen demanded harshly of Vizately: "Aren't you through yet?"

That gentleman paused in his labors, and turning about again, allowed his mouth to open.

"Both of my little friends," he observed, "apparently are cross; and I, as the innocent party, naturally receive the blame. What were you reading, Mercedes?"

The girl looked up from the page she was studying.

"Victory," she announced shortly, and bowed her head once more.

Stephen stared over the edge of his review. "Victory!"

"Well," decided Vizately, "it's a good book, and your taste is improving, but you needn't take it so hard. You aren't on a desert island."

"Um-umm!"

"Bravely spoken." Vizately poured an amber fluid into a glass. "Here, Stephen, drink this. It'll make you feel better."

The girl straightened up from the table.

"I've got to be going," she announced.

"Take supper with us after the show, darling?"

"Not if I know it," decided Stephen silently.

"I can't. I promised Hazel I'd go with her and a couple of sheiks to that ball—that thing the painters and writers give. That—"

"The Fiesta?"

"Yes."

"Well, you may see us there too. I have tickets—I was one of the founders before I learned better sense. Want to go, Stephen? You probably don't—neither do I; but you might as well say yes, for we'll go anyway."

"Wha-what is it?"

"It's a fancy-dress dance, but that needn't bother us."

"Le-let's decide later on."

"All right. First we'll have dinner."

VIZATELLE accompanied the girl into the vestibule. Stephen heard him saying good-by to her, and the opening and closing of the door. Presently he was back to meet the level, questioning, somewhat amused stare of Stephen's eyes. For a moment Vizately returned the stare, and then he shook his head and laughed half sighingly.

"No, my son," he said, "your suspicion flatters me, but it's not true. That in some ways is a remarkable young woman. I rather think that confusedly she's trying to improve her mind. Why, I can't imagine. It won't help her with the Irrationalities. But I suppose trying to improve your mind is

a congenital disease—you're either born with it or you're not. She seems to have been born with it. I've known her a couple of years. She borrows my books and comes here a lot." He sighed, this time quite openly.

"Our relationship is as harmless as that of two kittens; sometimes my vanity rather wishes it weren't."

Chapter Four

MERCEDES went down the stairs, in the soft light, on the noiseless hall carpet, saying to herself: "Green eyes and a long face. Cold as ice." She never used slang in her thoughts. "Damn gentlemen—damn them all!" Condemning in these terse phrases a large section of the masculine population and, on the whole, a section as innocent and trustworthy as most, perhaps more so. For Mercedes, none too much in love with the male under any circumstances, between six and half-past of that particular day was especially not in love with the male who concealed his more primitive impulses beneath a cloak of outer politeness and consideration. The cloak simply made him the more despicable, in Mercedes' eyes, and certainly the more difficult to handle.

She felt like a small wet mouse surrounded by large cats, some of whom, the majority, were obviously feline and predatory and ugly, with staring eyes and rough dusty fur, but a few of whom, much the most dangerous, were sleek and with ribbons around their necks. And you always imagined the latter were going to be such nice cats, and in the end they proved so disappointing.

Mercedes, born a modern young woman, had become even more so. She had singularly little respect for what she would have called "apple sauce." There was nothing she did not know, and there was nothing she found absolute. Circumstances altered cases, and circumstances were what counted. But as the cases ceased, with increasing clearness, to permit themselves to be bracketed in categories, the circumstances became more and more important. In other words, Mercedes was willing and looked forward some day to doing anything in the world for a man she could love and trust—provided such a creature could be found; but in the meantime she was determined not to do a thing beyond what she had to for the average man about her. Her philosophy was not a conscious thing; she was only sure that, if it could be avoided, she wasn't going to be crowded. Her mind and her body belonged to her, Mercedes Garcia, and nobody could force her to give them away. Sin was Forty-second Street and Broadway on a busy day; virtue was Central Park with not many people about. And the sleek cats annoyed her particularly because they had such opportunities for elbow-room and used them so stupidly.

She had had a bad afternoon before she had fled to the sanctuary of Vizately's apartment, a very bad afternoon. She continued to think about the afternoon as, the stairs accomplished, she came out of the doorway of the reconstructed house where Vizately lived, and peered about for a taxicab.

Sleet whipped along the comparatively deserted street. The electric lamps looked like sea-anemones under water. A taxi, a dripping black monster, slid up to the curb in answer to her signal, and she stepped into its gloomy and faintly damp recesses.

Curse the man! Just like all men—trying to take advantage of her because she was a woman. Mercedes leaned forward and rapped sharply on the window.

The driver at first pretended not to hear, and Mercedes rapped again. The man stopped his car, and leaning back, opened the door.



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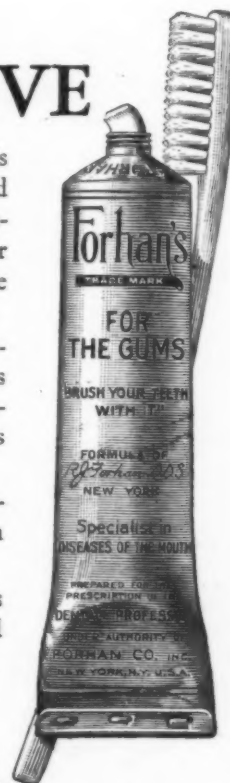
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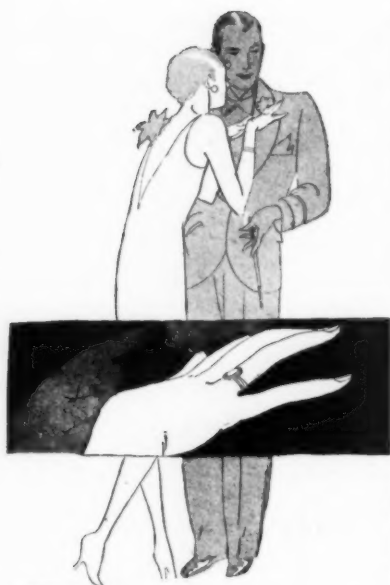
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"Put down your flag," she commanded brusquely.

He started to expostulate wetly. "But lady—look at the night. There's lots of them not out. It's real dangerous."

"Put down your flag," repeated Mercedes fiercely. "I'm no lady; I'm a New Yorker."

A bad afternoon. And Mercedes had thought it was going to be such a pleasant one. She had liked Charles Pointer Hastings, and she had liked his studio, high up in a tall building, to which she had gone several times; to one or two large teas, on one or two afternoons when only a few people had been there. Mercedes thought them intelligent people, and they impressed her—illustrators, artists male and female, a well dressed woman or so. Low-voiced, witty people, who wore good clothes and yet with a certain dash and carelessness. She was especially impressed by Charles Pointer Hastings himself. He was handsome in a white, languid, black-haired way—a tall, slim man of forty; and she knew he was famous, so famous that even some of the other girls at the Irrationalities had heard of him. Reproductions of his portraits came out in all the illustrated magazines, and photographs of their creator jostled them. He always wore beautifully made blue shirts with blue soft collars, and that too, for some reason, was distinguished.

Mercedes thought that his portraits were marvelous, almost as human as the people themselves and twice as good-looking. She did not catch his own weary nuances concerning them.

It was pleasant to sit on soft chairs or big divans in the fading light of a winter's day, the huge work-window a square of dimming vacancy, the other windows growing gray, the easels and pictures standing up like thin ghosts waiting for the studio to empty. The smell of paint and turpentine was fresh and workmanlike; a coal fire glowed in a grate; sometimes one of Hastings' friends or Hastings himself played the piano. Mercedes liked it especially when the latter happened. Hastings' music was always vague, tired and a trifle sad. It pleased her young happy sense of sorrow.

"I want to paint your portrait, Mercedes," he said, "a real portrait. You've got a devastating mouth, my child. The past and the future of the race are in it. . . . That's a terrible phrase, isn't it? That is, if you'll let the real shape of it—your mouth, I mean—appear a trifle. Think you can take some of the kalsomine off without catching cold? Come Tuesday? At three o'clock? Will that be all right? We'll talk the picture over first."

And Mercedes, used to compliments and finding most of them unexplainably insulting, was so overcome by the sincerity of this one that she could think of no flippancy in retort.

"Yes," she agreed humbly.

SHE thought a good deal about her mouth in the interval, and experimented with its decoration.

"Well, for the Lord's sake," inquired Miss Tourneur, more and more puzzled by her concentration, "what are you undressing for?"

"I'm not sure," observed Mercedes, dreamily engaged before her mirror, "whether we don't make a mistake using so much makeup. It spoils the shape of your mouth."

Miss Tourneur, who, for all her overly kind heart, had added to original Far Western terseness the cynicism of Broadway, cocked her head on one side. "Don't let that worry you, child," she announced wisely. "The lip-stick is a protection between the world and a girl's emotions. If they see the real shape of your mouth, they'll know too much about you."

But despite this sage advice, Mercedes presented herself at Hastings' studio on the

Tuesday in question, the Tuesday of rain and sleet, with no more red on her lips than nature had intended.

She came out of the bustling wetness of the street into the warm, rather oppressive silence of the big room, and Hastings, who was working on a portrait, met her smiling, a palette in his hand.

"Good," he proclaimed with what for him was eagerness. "Take off your things and make yourself comfortable. I've got a few minutes' more work on this daub." He pointed the handle of a brush at the middle of an opulent lady in red, very low-necked, sitting regally in a Venetian chair.

He continued to talk in short absent-minded sentences as he painted. Sometimes he stepped back and regarded his work, his head on one side. Then he would run forward and use his brush delicately and decisively. Mercedes, watching him from the divan, was absorbed with interest. She had never seen an artist in action before, and the precision and technical knowledge displayed by this one fascinated her.

Hastings squinted at the easel.

"I want to paint you in that Spanish shawl you wear in the first act, Mercedes," he said. "It's typical, and people know you in it."

Mercedes was silent for a moment.

"They ought to," she said finally, and dryly. And then she sat forward a trifle. "As is?" she asked somewhat breathlessly.

"How do you mean?"

"Well, I don't wear much under it."

"Certainly—just as you wear it on the stage. Try one on now. Go to that big armoire over there to the right, and open the top drawer. You'll find two shawls. And that's the dressing screen back of you. We'll see some poses, and then we can begin work tomorrow, or whenever it suits you."

MERCEDES hesitated. She stared an instant at the oblivious head of her painter friend. It was a nice head, particularly nice in its craftsmanlike absorption. Finally she arose, and crossing to the big wardrobe of black oak, found the shawls. She selected the one that more resembled her own, a crimson shawl with white roses embroidered upon it, and a white fringe, and going behind the screen, began to undress. She wasn't quite sure she liked this. She had the professional's distaste for any tableau which did not have footlights between it and the public. But then she supposed sitting for a portrait was different. Anyway, artists were different.

Hastings was pushing to one side the portrait of the opulent lady in red. He looked over his shoulder and smiled once more his charming smile, a sudden illumination in an otherwise expressionless face.

"Perfect," he said. "Get up on that model stand and try to look as if you liked it. Now,"—he came back to the center of the room—"it will be hard on you standing, won't it? And yet—Do you think you can stand? Good. Very well, then—A little to the left. Turn a little to the left. So—"

He crossed over and pushed Mercedes about, as impersonally as if he were arranging brocades. "You're hearing guitars, or something. Look down. Try to like guitars. Like 'em. . . . You do like them, don't you? Fine! That's it. Don't move. I'll get some paper and charcoal."

He hurried off and returned to try several poses, some standing, some sitting on a bench, some looking back over a shoulder. Finally he threw his last sketch and the charcoal on a table and sank into a chair and lit a cigarette. He stared for a moment at Mercedes as if in reality he had not seen her until then. She was crouched on the bench, a trifle tired, one knee caught up between her hands.

He made a sudden abrupt gesture. "Go put on your clothes, my child," he said harshly. His voice was different from the absent-minded gay tones he used when at work.

Mercedes felt that in some way she must have offended him. She was puzzled and hurt.

WHEN she came back, Hastings was making tea at a small table drawn up before the fire.

"Sit down," he suggested. "Want a cigarette?"

Already the studio was dim and shadowy. Mercedes took a cigarette, and Hastings leaned over from his chair, holding a lighted match.

"Your eyes are extraordinary, lighted up like that," he murmured. "Blue caves hung with lanterns." The match was shaken to darkness in his fingers. "Mercedes,"—he took her hand,—"*my dear*,"—his clasp tightened,—"*do you like me at all?*"

"Yes, of course."

"Very much?"

"Yes."

"I've grown very fond of you. I—"

He hesitated, and Mercedes' heart beat faster. Was he going to ask her to marry him? And if he did, what would she answer? She was not in love with him, but he was nice, and famous and rich.

"I'm lonely," he went on broodingly. "Very lonely, and I'm getting older. That is, old in what the world can give me. Will you—"

"What?"

"Would you be willing to care for me a little?"

"But I do now."

"No, I mean really care. Not love—love is a different thing, either quicker or of slower growth. Besides, I've lost my capacity for loving. But care enough to come here and—"

Mercedes' heart stopped beating.

"And what?" she asked without interest. She disengaged her hand and rose to her feet slowly. "O-oh," she said wearily.

She walked over to the mantelpiece and leaned an elbow on it. "When it comes to that," she continued, "you're just like the rest, aren't you? Only you take a whole lot more time saying it. Turn on the light and give me some tea."

She felt desolate and tired and small, as if she had been blown about by a wind full of grit. Not a man—no, not one of them—thought it worth his while to ask her to marry him. She wasn't good enough.

She left the mantelpiece and crossed to a window and pulled aside the curtain. The wet driving dusk rushed past her, but the rain and sleet could not hide the brilliant lights of the city. They stretched away beneath her interminably. What a huge, terrific place it was. And disinterested. Here were two little figures away up above it, and who cared what happened to them? Well, Hastings perhaps—a few people would care what happened to him. But her? Who would care what happened to her?

IN the shadows back of her Hastings stirred as if he had been about to become angry and then had changed his mind.

"You are quite right," he was saying, and his voice was as weary as Mercedes felt. "Quite right. It's one of the few assets women have, and I suppose they ought to bargain with it for marriage. But marriage—I'd ask you to marry me, my dear, if I didn't know how it would end, for I really like you. I admire you, too. But I've tried marriage, and I've tried divorce—that was when I was romantic. And divorce is even more horrid than marriage." There was a long silence. "Whatever you do, Mercedes, my child, do it hard and do it honestly."

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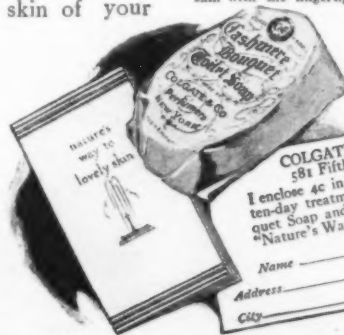
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"Why?"
"Because," —Hastings smiled, his charming smile,—"if you don't, when you reach my age, you'll hang on to life only for its sensations. And,"—he waited again,—"as a mature person, not unfamous, you'll have the chagrin perhaps of being refused by a child something you shouldn't have asked for in the first place." He brought his fist down on the table so that the cups and saucers rattled. "If I only loved my work as I once thought I was going to!" he said, and sprang briskly to his feet. "Forget it. We'll have some tea." He crossed to an electric switch and the studio was flooded with soft light. "Don't be afraid of me," he resumed, smiling and coming back to the table. "We'll go on painting the portrait as usual."
"I'm not afraid of you," said Mercedes,

and she wasn't. There had been only a moment when she had been afraid, and that was when, in the darkness, his voice had sounded so lonely and remote. But somehow—was this all of romance? They said occasions like these were more romantic than ordinary romance. Was this all there was to it, then? . . . "Hand me my bag from that divan, will you?"

Hastings looked alarmed.

"What are you going to do? You're not so silly as to leave, are you?"

"Oh, no." Mercedes peered into the mirror above the mantelpiece. "I'm only going to put on some lip stick."

(This notable novel of East and West in America comes to situations of exceptional interest in the next installment—which you may enjoy in our forthcoming August issue.)

SOLD

(Continued from page 96)

wondered how to begin. But the best lines in the play were never Mr. Bebee's.

"Well!" said Mrs. Bebee. "I've sold the house!"

"You've sold the house?"

"I have." Her eyes glowed proudly. "Haven't I always told you I was a good business woman? But you'd never believe me. Oh, no. Well, sir, I took things into my own hands this afternoon."

Mr. Bebee followed her weakly into the living-room.

"I was shopping," she began, "and I ran into that poor Mr. Farney on State Street. He was waiting for that daughter of his. I sympathize with him greatly, Andrew, and he saw it. We—we had tea together." She glossed over her confession. "Quite cozily," she added in expiation. "There's something very cozy about the tea habit. Well! I saw at once he was in the mood to listen to a woman who understood him. He said (you mustn't mind, Andrew), he said he'd like to live where—where I had made a home out of the sticks and mortar of a house." Something reminiscent swept over Mr. Bebee. "Go on," he said impatiently.

"And—well—when a man's in that sort of soft mood, a woman can do anything with him." Mr. Bebee was mastered by queer discomfort. It struck him suddenly that Fleeta might not be the naïve child he had thought. His wife was talking briskly, with a triumph in her voice that rang like a familiar tune he had recently heard.

"You know I told you the other night, Andrew, some men get sentimental over a woman—oh, momentarily! You wouldn't understand. You're not like that of course, dear, but—" Mr. Bebee felt that contradiction would be out of place. "It's a softness they should be punished for," she went on with an air of impartial justness. "Any woman knows that! I got a check, Andrew, 'earnest money,' he called it, and a memorandum or something covering the sale and everything. And Andrew! How much do you think I got for the house?"

MR. BEBEE was tremendously occupied with his immediate past in a tea-room. "Soft!" Had he been soft? Why, he had practically given that girl three thousand dollars!

But the excited lady before him demanded his undivided attention. "Andrew! How much do you think I got?"

"I haven't an idea, Flora," he said wearily. "How much did you get?"

"Twenty-one thousand dollars! Cash!" She said it in capitals and the letters struck Mr. Bebee between the eyes and splintered and dug pointed, mocking fingers into his brain. He groped for a chair.

"Twenty-one thousand dollars!" he re-

peated feebly. "Twenty-one—" His mind hung briefly. Then his voice rose in strident demand. "Flora! What was the extra thousand for?"

"For extras!" she answered brightly. "For the built-in bookcases and the cedar chest and—"

Understanding overtook Mr. Bebee as he looked at her. "You vamped Farney!" he shouted accusingly. "You vamped him!"

She resented hotly: "I did not, Andrew Bebee! I used my woman's intuition. I've been telling you for thirteen years I could help you in your business, but you'd never believe me. Well, perhaps after this you will. Perhaps, after this, you'll remember that it was I who closed this deal when you couldn't."

Mr. Bebee saw that he would never, never hear the last of this. His life stretched ahead of him bleakly with constant reminders of How Mrs. Bebee Closed The Deal. He didn't know but what she'd be giving out interviews on it! His mind worked fast and then Mr. Bebee played the first trump card of his matrimonial life. "Oh, I don't know," Mr. Bebee drawled. "I had tea myself this afternoon. With—er—Fleeta. She's a dear little thing." His voice sounded queer even to himself. But he must make his point. "Don't know," said Mr. Bebee with false smoothness, "whether I want to sell or not. Be nice to see more of that little girl."

He watched appreciatively the alarm spread over Mrs. Bebee's so recently buoyant face. He hoped she was thinking the worst! If she thought she must get him away from Fleeta she wouldn't refer to the sale of the house again. She would be afraid of reminding him of his softness. Softness! Hah! As if any woman could get the best of him.

"Why—why—Andrew!" She was stumbling amidst new, strange thoughts. Could it be possible that her Andrew— He always had been funny about that girl. . . . Mr. Bebee toyed with his watch chain in a manner he hoped was quite depraved. "Andrew," she said softly, pathetically, "I—I hope you will put this deal through, dear. We—we both want to get away to California, don't we, dear?"

Mr. Bebee was reviewing details like an efficiency expert. Farney wouldn't back out; besides, there was the "earnest money." And he wouldn't want his daughter to know a woman had made a fool of him. It wasn't the sort of thing a man wants known. Mr. Bebee looked at Mrs. Bebee. She was a darn bright little woman, his wife. But she had to be handled like all women. "Oh, well—" He laid a kindly hand on her arm. "Oh, well, if you want me to go ahead with the sale, I will. Your happiness is the only thing that counts—really."



"We'll save twenty miles by going this way."

"I know, but if the road is all like this—"

"My dear, with these Kelly-Springfield Flexible tires you'll never know you're on a rough road."

When Seconds Count



"In a flash it happened. . . . My little girl was hurt. And I could not do a thing to relieve her suffering. There we were—waiting—waiting. The minutes seemed hours. . . . Then along came a car and out jumped a man who began to work, scarcely saying a word. He cleansed her wounds and bound them up with gauze. . . . The doctor said later that he had probably saved her from serious infection. . . . perhaps had saved her life."

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